

Art that is Not So New:
Tracing Aesthetics and Thematic Elements of the Pre-Raphaelites,
Arts and Crafts, and Art Nouveau Movements

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ABSTRACT

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This work traces the role of art, specifically the economic and social accessibility of art to the public, as perceived by these select artists, their contemporaries, and by modern critics. The poets and artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood deliberately and thoughtfully created their own coterie: recorded their discussions regarding aesthetics, created rubrics for creating and evaluating art, collaborated on artwork, and chose their own name to signify what they identified as the truest art. They sought to be faithful to nature while highlighting the beauty in commonplace occurrences. Like Janus, they looked backward for inspiration and forward to a society in which art that achieves these goals is both universally accessible and appreciated.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood inspired a movement of artists who sought to emulate them. William Morris adapted the aesthetic of highlighting the beauty in commonplace objects by creating decorative arts in the Arts and Crafts style – first, for his own home, then through his businesses. He, too, looked backward to the past for inspiration for technique, as well as to a future in which all individuals were on equal economic standing, and worked collaboratively for the joy of work well done, not motivated by capitalist ideologies. Morris achieved his goal of beautifying the commonplace for those who could afford his artisanal crafts; he used images from nature,

particularly floral patterns, in doing so. Although he used his own wealth to support socialist causes, he did not embrace a socialist lifestyle for himself or his family.

The link between Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau is not as commonly understood as the link between the Pre-Raphaelites and Arts and Crafts. Alphonse Mucha is credited as being one of the first to popularize Art Nouveau style. He took inspiration from the past – the history of his faith and his national identity – as well as from his lifetime. Looking forward, he created murals in the Municipal House in Prague, and his art installation *The Slav Epic*, as gifts to future Czech citizens. In creating these works, as well as his advertising posters, Mucha achieved what the other artists referenced did not. Mucha created art for the people that was affordable and accessible.

Supporting evidence includes primary sources, both writings and visual art, as well as secondary sources: biographies, analyses, and criticisms.

DEDICATION

Cette œuvre est dédiée à mon fils;

Julian

tu es ma raison d'être.

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PREFACE

The artists discussed in this work, and the art they created, have had personal significance to me for many years. The Pre-Raphaelites and William Morris have been enduring figures in my life, dating back to my earliest childhood memories. Every year, under our family's Christmas tree, there was a slim, expertly-wrapped box; every year, my mother gave my father a silk William Morris necktie from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. When he retired, Dad gave most of these ties to my youngest brother, who now wears them to his own office, a few blocks away from my father's old building.

I had been an early, and voracious, reader. In my primary school years, I usually zipped through the year's curriculum before Thanksgiving, and spent the remainder of the academic year by the bookshelves in the classroom, reading all the meager holdings my teachers had. My parents were encouraged to find enrichment activities that the school would not provide. I was therefore enrolled in art classes at the Delaware Art Museum, a short drive from my school. I was fascinated and thrilled by the opportunities in my Saturday morning classes. Pencils! Pastels! Clay! Plaster! I created a clay figurine of my beloved grandfather that he kept on his desk for the remainder of his life, undoubtedly more pleased by the fact that I thought highly enough of him to attempt the rendering than in the quality of the rendering itself.

I was a terrible artist.

One of the museum's galleries fascinated me. It had furniture in it – not to touch or use, but displayed, like a statue. And the deep green wallpaper, resplendent with willow leaves, was labeled as art. This defied imagination. How could a desk, or

wallpaper, be art? They weren't paintings or statues. I learned a few things during my time as a student at the Delaware Art Museum. Clay, when molded too thin, would crack in the kiln. Plaster, when layered too thick, would neither dry nor harden. The same artist who created the patterns in the neckties my father wore also created the patterns in the wallpaper at the museum. And decorative arts could be understood, appreciated, embraced, and applied – even by a tiny student-artist.

More than twenty years later, I accompanied my mother and her friends to Prague. During our visit to the Mucha Museum, while the docent spoke about Mucha's work for Sarah Bernhardt, I focused on his collaborations with the jeweler Georges Fouquet. Mucha had created three-dimensional art, including jewelry, furniture, and furnishings for Fouquet's shop. His work in decorative arts was not present; I learned that the Fouquet shop had been reconstructed in a Parisian museum. Aside from a few photographs, there was no reference in Prague to Mucha's work in the decorative arts.

When I turned back to the docent and the Parisian posters, I was drawn to the floral backgrounds in the posters. Looking past Bernhardt, I saw repeating floral patterns that reminded me of wallpaper in the Delaware Art Museum and of neckties under the Christmas tree. The patterns were neither as compact nor as layered as Morris's; Mucha's patterns were designed as background, whereas Morris's patterns were the focal point. Nonetheless, I could not unsee the similarities. I wondered if these similar details in the works of two contemporaneous artists, who seemingly had no direct interaction with each other, could be more than happenstance. Thus, this project is evolved from a lifetime of exposure to art, art history, literature, and poetry; for that, I will always be grateful.

INTRODUCTION

The history of an artistic movement is frequently presented in a framework of the social and political history of its time. This perspective paints artists as reactionary, responding to the cultural ethos of their lives. This view diminishes the conversations and rejoinders between art movements, artists, works of art, as well as the impact that art and artists have on the worlds around them. This study will examine the role of artistic self-definition as illustrated by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. It will also examine the evolution and achievement of this aesthetic through the Arts and Crafts movement and in to Art Nouveau, showing that Art Nouveau is a continuation of Arts and Crafts, not merely a contradiction of Impressionism.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was active in the early years of the Victorian era (1848-1850). Unlike other artistic movements, this group deliberately defined themselves, their members, their goals, and their ideology, and their name. The original seven members collaborated on works to a degree not seen previously in the modern era. These writers and artists strove not only to create literature and art, but also to define a new aesthetic. Their goal was to elevate the common aspects of everyday life in art and in writing, and doing so by creating visual art that recalled the art of the Renaissance. Although the original seven members of the Brotherhood were only active as a unified group for three years, the individual artists maintained their aesthetic, which was carried forward to the Arts and Crafts movement by William Morris and influenced Art Nouveau artists such as Alfons Mucha.

The Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic, defined by William Rossetti, was to show the beauty in commonplace occurrences and to elevate the ordinary. This was in contrast to

more popular art of the era; it was, at the time, seen as base and crude, lacking in artistry. Following the dissolution of the Brotherhood, the artistry of William Morris then became the bridge to and cornerstone of the Arts and Crafts movement. The details of Morris's art, particularly of his embroidery patterns and decorative art, maintained the aesthetic; his work illuminated the common, the everyday. Morris's works as an author and political activist were intertwined with his art. As a Marxist, he struggled between the desire to make his art accessible to everyone and creating art that could support his life in a capitalist society. The evolution of art that was accessible was further carried forward during the Art Nouveau era, when Alfons Mucha created not only formal art and jewelry, but also graphic art, and art for advertising. Mucha's graphic designs, including the artwork that advertised Sarah Bernhardt's productions, realized the goals of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic. He elevated the ordinary and made art accessible – because he used his art for advertising.

The literature and visual art that developed from the Pre-Raphaelites, and then from the Arts and Crafts movement, was not simply organically evolved. The Pre-Raphaelites were deliberate; they self-defined, and acted in opposition to the prevailing attitudes of mid-nineteenth century Britain. Their definition of art and artistry, as articulated in their fiction and non-fiction writings, not only deliberately defined their aesthetic, but also created the foundation of visual, graphic, and decorative arts in the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau movements.

The codification of their ideals was unusual. Whereas other artists have collaborated with each other (i.e., Byron and the Shelleys), the Pre-Raphaelites deliberately articulated their goals and ideals: a return to artistic stylings of the medieval

era, to an art that illustrated the beauty in everyday people, objects, and events. This self-consciousness provided not only an ideal, but also a topic for debate amongst the Brotherhood. They could evaluate their own and each other's work against their own metric. The codification, and their varied loyalty to it, was also a source of disagreement amongst the members. Although all seven original members only collaborated for three years, they all maintained loyalty in some fashion to the ideology that originally bound them together.

Today, we can use that ideology to evaluate their literary and artistic works. We can also use their aesthetic to trace their impact on the literature and art not only of the original seven members, but also of other artists who carried out these ideals. Whether considering the fiction and textiles of William Morris, or the marketing posters of Alfons Mucha, we can see that the aesthetic goals articulated by a brotherhood of marginalized artists affected the evolution and perception of art in several mediums, and is still relevant to modern discussions of the goals, meaning, and accessibility of art.

There is more significance to this study than the narrow focus of a few artistic movements of the nineteenth century. The larger questions, those regarding the purpose, definition, and accessibility of art, are still relevant. In particular, Morris's motivation for researching and crafting decorative arts was to counter the mass production – and cheapening – of goods due to industrialization. The purpose of art was defined by William Rossetti; it was embodied in the works of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, of William Morris, and of Alfons Mucha. Artists elevate the ordinary, make their works accessible, and inspire conversation about the meaning and purpose of art; these questions are still significant today.

Whereas most art historians will agree that the Arts and Crafts movement developed its aesthetic from that of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, there is little scholarly work linking either movement to Art Nouveau. Instead, Art Nouveau is usually described as a reaction to Impressionism – not a continuation of Arts and Crafts. This perspective is limiting to all three movements examined in this study. No matter how short-lived or popular an artistic or literary movement may be, it does not exist in a vacuum. An artist's goals may not be achieved immediately, or even during the course of that artist's life. The Pre-Raphaelites and "The Firm" of Morris and Burne-Jones lived lives of public scrutiny. It is implausible that there was no artistic or philosophical rejoinder from their contemporaries.

The impact of Arts and Crafts on the Art Nouveau movement is often overlooked or downplayed. Art Nouveau is sometimes seen as a short-lived movement, as a mere reaction to Impressionism (Gontar, Willette). This attitude downplays the aesthetic and thematic foundations of Art Nouveau, and its connection with other movements. It was an evolution, a conversation with the past. In the details, in the lines, in the postures taken by the female subjects, a viewer can see that Art Nouveau was more than a simple countering of Impressionism. Much of the artistry of Art Nouveau paid visual tribute to the works of the preceding fifty years, and did so with its own whiplash flourish. It must be noted that Art Nouveau was frequently (if not originally) called "le style Mucha" (Mucha style) during Mucha's years in Paris ("Themes: Art Posters").

During the last ten years of the nineteenth century, Mucha became famous for his commercial art, particularly his posters of Sarah Bernhardt. He applied, and was commissioned, to create murals for the pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina (then under

Austrian rule) at the 1900 Universal Exhibition in Paris. In addition to his murals, Mucha also created two-dimensional art for the Austrian pavilion, as well as three-dimensional displays for the jeweler Georges Fouquet. As a result of the Exposition, the “new art” became universally popular. However, Mucha did not identify his work as part of any new movement. Although Mucha is credited with the popularization (if not the creation) of Art Nouveau, he identified himself as an artist of the Arts and Crafts movement, and, according to the biography written by his son, Jiri Mucha (62), scoffed at the label “Art Nouveau.” Like Morris, Mucha worked in diverse media. Unlike Morris, Mucha produced graphic, commercial, and public art, and thus achieved the Pre-Raphaelite ideal to elevate the ordinary, and created art that was publicly accessible.

The explorations of these themes will follow in a predominantly chronological order. The first chapter will provide an Anglo-centric overview of key historical, political, social, and literary events in the United Kingdom, beginning with the reign of George III and culminating in the mid-nineteenth century. Chapter two will examine the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood during their three years of planned, communal activities (1848-1851). These seven artists debated the meaning and purpose of art, codified their goals and aesthetics, and chose their own name, which signified their commitment to their ideals. Their stated purpose was to study nature, to pay homage to notable artists, writers, and legends, and to elevate the ordinary by showing the beauty (in both writing and art) of everyday life. Chapter three traces the evolution of the Pre-Raphaelites after the dissolution of the formal Brotherhood. In the decade following (1851-1860), the popularity of the movement grew. They continued to show the beauty of everyday life in additional artistic formats, including book illustrations and murals. These previously-

vilified artists were commissioned to complete such notable works as providing illustrations for an edition of Poet Laureate Tennyson's poetry and for painting frescoes in the Oxford Union Library. Additional artists joined their movement, including William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones.

The fourth and fifth chapters focus on the works of William Morris. Chapter four addresses the period of his life 1855-1875, from his time studying at Oxford until his friendship with Dante Gabriel Rossetti was irretrievably broken. Morris, who had a lifelong interest in medievalism and medieval craftsmanship, applied the aesthetic of elevating the ordinary when creating appointments for his own houses. He integrated his studies of nature into the stained glass, fabrics, and wallpapers he designed. He and his collaborators translated their skills in the decorative arts into a successful business that created artisanal appointments for their customers. Chapter five discusses the continued evolution of Morris's business and decorative arts endeavors (1875-1896). Morris was an individual of means, having gained his wealth both from inheritance and as a business owner. His financial standing may be seen to be in conflict with his political writings and activities, in which he espoused socialism. His writings about art indicate that art should provide pleasure both to the artist and the consumer, and that art can be found anywhere, not just in a museum or gallery.

The sixth chapter explores the work of Alfons Mucha (1860-1939), the Czech-born artist who is often credited with being the first significant Art Nouveau designer. Mucha's education and early years had been supported by patrons and sponsors. He did not have any inherited wealth, and supported himself as a working artist: painting theater scenery, designing advertising posters, painting murals for

government buildings, and creating large installations of public art. Mucha stated that he wanted to create art for the people; in doing so, he achieved what the Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts artists had not. Particularly through his work in posters, he created art that elevated the ordinary and was accessible to all.

CHAPTER ONE: A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

1800-1850

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed in London in 1848 by seven male artists and writers. These well-to-do men banded together in deliberate opposition to the prevailing aesthetics of the time, particularly to those espoused by the Royal Academy of Art. In order to appreciate the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, it is critical to understand the historical context of their era. The articulated goals of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood were not only reactions to the prevailing aesthetics of the era (as exemplified by the Royal Academy of Art), but also to the greater economic, political, and social upheaval of the times.

The nineteenth century was a period of sweeping change and upheaval for the political, economic, and social systems of the United Kingdom. The impact of the Industrial Revolution, which started in the late eighteenth century, grew in both speed and size in the nineteenth century. Members of the working classes left their farms and cottage industries to pursue employment in factories, which were located in cities and near developing transportation hubs. The Industrial Revolution impacted not only the politics and economics of the era, but also, and perhaps more acutely, the social structures and norms of the time. As the United Kingdom moved towards a more urban, industrialized culture, every aspect of daily life was altered for all but the extremely wealthy: living conditions, working conditions, family structure, leisure time, education, and recreation. The changes were broad, deep, and irrevocable. This chapter will survey major political, economic, and social events that took place in the United Kingdom from 1800 until 1850.

The form of government remained constant throughout the nineteenth century; the United Kingdom was a constitutional monarchy. Robert Tombs, a history professor at St. John's College, Cambridge ("Robert Tombs"), posits that the power of the monarchy was curtailed and the importance of the House of Commons was codified due to constitutional reform in the nineteenth century; however, there were no radical changes to the form of government itself (395). Four different monarchs ruled throughout the century. Twenty men served as Prime Minister during the same time; as several served multiple non-consecutive terms, there were effectively forty governments, ranging in length from twenty-three days to fifteen years. The consistency in the form of government was a stabilizing force, but the irregular terms of those who governed contributed to the feeling of turmoil during the century (Kerr 32).

The Monarchy

Four monarchs, all from the House of Hanover, ruled the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century. King George III ascended the throne as a 22-year-old in 1760, upon the death of his grandfather, George II. George III had become the heir apparent and Prince of Wales following his father's sudden death in 1751. The historian Robert Tombs describes George III as "one of our most high-minded, determined and disastrous monarchs" (344). George III did have some successes in the early years of his reign, including victory over France in the Seven Years' War (also known in North America as the French and Indian War), which ended in 1763. However, George III is often associated with the costly, although victorious, involvement in the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars (1789-1815), and with the costlier, disastrous loss of the United States

in the War of American Independence (1775-1783). The Acts of Union (1800) merged Great Britain and Ireland to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Author and historian Marjie Bloy points out that, although the Acts of Union may have initially seemed like a success for Great Britain, the long-term effects were devastating for both Great Britain and Ireland (Bloy).

George III also achieved infamy regarding his mental health; Tombs addresses both the Regency Crisis of 1788-1789 and the Regency of 1810-1820. For a period of nearly five months from October 1788 to March 1789, George III experienced an episode of profound instability, and was unable to open Parliament (Tombs 364-365). During this constitutional crisis, known as the Regency Crisis, Parliament met illegally to discuss installing the Prince of Wales as a regent. The conundrum seemed insurmountable: Parliament could not legally meet or pass laws without the King's consent, not even to appoint a regent, but the King was unable to perform any function that would have empowered Parliament to legislate legally. Despite this, the House of Commons convened and passed the Regency Bill in February 1789. George III recovered, and validated the opening of Parliament; the Regency Bill became moot (Tombs 364).

From 1811-1820, during a period known as the Regency (Tombs 412), George III's mental health rendered him unable to rule. George III never recovered, and lived out his final ten years in seclusion in Windsor Castle, suffering from mental illness, dementia, and blindness. His son George, the Prince of Wales, ruled as Prince Regent for the final ten years of George III's reign. During the Regency, the United Kingdom was drawn deeply into continental alliances to defeat Napoleon; this was achieved in 1815.

When George III died in 1820, the Regency ended; the Prince of Wales continued to rule, but as King George IV.

George IV was unpopular as Prince of Wales, as Prince Regent, and as the King (Tombs 431). He was seen as a frivolous spendthrift who was more concerned with his lavish lifestyle, clothes, and castles than with matters of state. In April 1795, the King had forced the Prince of Wales to marry his first cousin, Caroline of Brunswick, or risk losing financial support for his extravagant lifestyle (Smith, 70). Dr. Katie Carpenter, a history professor at the University of Leeds, delved into the matter of the marriage between the Prince of Wales (later George IV) and Caroline. Their marriage failed within the first year; the couple spent only two nights together before separating (Carpenter). They separated after the January 1796 birth of their only child, the Princess Charlotte, and the Prince of Wales restricted Caroline's access to their daughter. George had several mistresses and was rumored to have fathered children with his mistresses. Princess Caroline was a popular figure, particularly sympathetic for the mistreatment she had received from her husband. George, seeking grounds for divorce and annulment, had his wife investigated for adultery; however, no evidence was found during this "Delicate Investigation" (Carpenter).

When Princess Charlotte died in childbirth in 1817, hours after giving birth to a stillborn boy, George had refused to notify Caroline of the death of their daughter; Caroline heard it in passing in a public area. Princess Charlotte, the heir presumptive, had predeceased both her father, the Prince Regent, and her grandfather, who was in full decline. The nation mourned her loss; as her father's only legitimate child, she would have become the ruling monarch if she had lived. The death of Princess Charlotte meant

that her father no longer had an heir to the throne. This inspired her father's unmarried brothers to marry and produce legitimate descendants who would become potential heirs to the throne. One brother, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, married Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg in May 1818. Their only child, Princess Victoria of Kent – the future Queen Victoria – was born in May 1819 (Kerr 33).

Carpenter's writings about the marriage of George IV and Caroline of Brunswick address the tumultuous marriage from its troubled beginnings through its scandalous, bitter ends. Upon inheriting the throne in 1820, George IV sought to divorce his wife, at least partially inspired by a desire to deny her the title of Queen. Due to the public outcry, he dropped the divorce proceedings. However, he refused to allow her access to the coronation or to even carry the title of Queen. When she tried to enter Westminster Abbey on July 19, 1821, the day of the coronation, she was refused entry. Caroline became ill later that day, believing that she had been poisoned. She died within the month, and her body was returned to Brunswick for her funeral and burial. Following her death, the 59-year-old George IV was free to remarry (and potentially produce a legitimate heir), but he did not. According to English historian Christopher Hibbert, George IV remained unpopular for the rest of his life. The Duke of Wellington had described him as “the worst man I ever fell in with my whole life, the most selfish, the most false, the most ill-natured, the most entirely without one redeeming quality” (Hibbert 310). Following the death of George IV, Wellington equivocated, stating that George IV had been “a magnificent patron of the arts, the most extraordinary compound of talent, wit, buffoonery, obstinacy, and good feeling – in short, a medley of the most opposite qualities, with a great preponderance of good – that I ever saw in any character

in my life” (Hibbert 344). According to Hibbert, *The Times* coverage of George IV’s death stated that his death was not a cause for regret, and that, as he died friendless, he would not be mourned (342).

When George IV died in January 1830, his younger brother William, the Duke of Clarence, ascended the throne as King William IV. The ascension of William IV was the first time in over a century that the monarchy did not pass lineally, from parent to child (or, in the case of George II to George III, to grandchild). Nor would the monarchy pass to a direct descendant of William. Like his older brothers, William IV did not leave any heirs; two legitimate children died in infancy, three legitimate children were stillborn, and his ten illegitimate children were precluded from the monarchy. In contrast to his highly unpopular predecessor, William was more respected and admired; he was seen as fastidious and frugal (Van der Kiste 178). He was not concerned with the visual trappings – arts, buildings, furnishings, and clothing – on which his brother had spent large sums. William refused to live at Buckingham Palace, even though the Palace had undergone costly renovations under the orders of George IV (Somerset 112). William had served in the Royal Navy in his youth, and had been stationed in New York during the American Revolution.

In his *Short History of the Victorian Era*, Gordon Kerr (33) summarizes the Royal Family and the events that led to the investiture of Queen Victoria in 1837. William’s younger brother, Prince Edward of Kent, had only one legitimate offspring; Edward’s daughter, Princess [Alexandrina] Victoria, was born in May 1819. She was less than a year old when her father, Edward, died in January 1820; her paternal grandfather, George III, died six days later. From the time of his ascension to the throne, William knew that

his young niece would succeed him as monarch. Both he and his wife, Queen Adelaide, were fond of the young Princess Victoria, and tried to include her in palace events, despite conflicts with her mother, the Duchess of Kent. Over the course of young Princess Victoria's life, her mother kept her isolated from others – including King William – and under her mother's strict control (Lacey 133-134). Under the Duchess's rules regarding her daughter's upbringing, known as the Kensington System, the Princess was not allowed anywhere unless accompanied by her mother, her mother's lady-in-waiting, or her governess. Victoria was not even allowed to sleep alone in her own bedroom. Throughout her childhood, she was only allowed two playmates: her half-sister from her mother's first marriage, and the daughter of her mother's assistant (Lacey 135).

Victoria's upbringing was the source of conflict between William IV and the Duchess of Kent – and of great personal unhappiness for the princess; in her own words, her childhood was “rather melancholy” (Hibbert 19). The Duchess sought to keep her daughter isolated and dependent upon her mother; she hoped that this would allow her to continue to influence her daughter after the Princess became the ruling monarch (Hibbert 27). In contrast with his sister-in-law's attempts to keep the future monarch isolated and dependent, William sought to introduce his niece to royal life in order to better prepare her for her transition to the monarchy. At a dinner party given for William and Adelaide's birthdays, in August 1836, William decided to speak openly regarding the rift with his sister-in-law. He announced that he hoped to live at least another nine months until the Princess reached age eighteen, in order to avoid having her mother serve as Regent (Somerset 209). William IV died in June 1837, twenty-six days after the

eighteenth birthday of his niece, Princess Victoria of Kent; she then became Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Queen Victoria ruled for over sixty-three years until her death in 1901. Victoria's consort, Prince Albert of Saxe-Gothe and Coburg, was a critical figure in Victoria's monarchy from their marriage in 1840 until his death in 1861. Although initially viewed with suspicion by the British (Kerr 5), Albert grew to be admired by the population, respected in large part for his work on behalf of his adopted country. He was deeply mourned both by Victoria and the British population when he died in 1861, at forty-two years of age. Albert is frequently credited with helping to shape the modern monarchy; through his influence, Queen Victoria was an active participant in her government, but reticent regarding her own political leanings (Kerr 53). Victoria's nine children, and many of her forty-two grandchildren, were married to monarchs, future monarchs, and nobility throughout Europe. However, family ties did not preclude her descendants from declaring war on each other a mere thirteen years after her death. Familial relationships had no discernable impact on the nationalism that led to World War I, even when it meant that actions – or inactions – led to the deaths of family members (e.g., the Romanov family).

French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars

The French Revolution began in 1789. The threat to the French monarchy and aristocracy captured the fearful attention of European heads of state. This threat – the overthrow of the monarchy and centuries of dominance by wealthy aristocrats – was particularly visceral to the British, following upon the heels of the loss of the colonies

that became the United States. The threat grew more palpable with the executions of King Louis XIV, Queen Marie-Antoinette, and the thousands executed during the Reign of Terror. However, it was Napoleon's rise to power – first as a military leader, then as a political leader – that created the greatest threat to European countries. From his invasion of Austria in 1796, to crowning himself as “Emperor of the French” in 1804 and proclaiming his infant son to be King of Italy, to his military invasion of Russia, Napoleon seemed determined to conquer all of Europe, if not the entire world.

Great Britain had battled with France in the New World during the eighteenth century: in multiple locations throughout North America during the Seven Years' War and the American Revolution. Battling with France was almost part of the British identity; that did not change with the Acts of Union or with Napoleon's rise to power. The United Kingdom joined forces with several varying European countries in a fluid series of coalitions against France. Those international coalitions fought Napoleon and the French in the Napoleonic Wars from 1805-1815.

Napoleon was ultimately defeated in 1815 (Tombs 414) and exiled to the island of Saint Helena, where he died in 1821. Thirty-three years later, his nephew Louis-Napoleon would become the first President of France; Louis-Napoleon later declared himself Napoleon III, Emperor of the French (Tombs 562). He was dethroned in 1870, and the French monarchy was abolished for all time. Napoleon III had the distinction of being both the first President and the final monarch of France.

The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution brought about seismic change to the economic, political, and social structures of the United Kingdom. The Industrial Revolution largely took place during the nineteenth century. Queen Victoria reigned 1837-1901; although there is a great deal of overlap in the timeline, “Industrial Revolution” and “Victorian Era” are two historical terms that are not interchangeable.

The first recorded use of a steam engine was in the late eighteenth century. James Watt is known for refining the engine and making it more efficient (Tombs 376, 379). The applications for the use of the engine grew rapidly. In the early part of the nineteenth century, the steam engine was used for transportation: for use in boats and for the newly-invented trains (Tombs 427). Soon, steam engines were used to power stationary equipment in large factories (Tombs 438). These developments allowed for increased speed and output in factory settings, as well as greater ease and reduced cost in transporting people, supplies, and mass-produced products (Tombs 473).

The rise of industrialism caused a domino effect in the lives of the working classes (Tombs 437). Workers who had previously lived in rural settings had farmed and harvested in annual cycles; they may have worked in small cottage industries in the periods between farming and harvesting (Tombs 432). They would have traveled on foot or by the power of an animal (on horseback or on an animal-powered vehicle such as a wagon or cart). Due to the invention of the train, those who could afford to do so were able to travel greater distances both with less effort and time. With the rise of the factories, workers could take trains to move to an industrial center or large city. There, they lived in cheap, hastily-constructed domiciles built to house the workers for the

burgeoning factories; living conditions were usually cramped and unsanitary (Tombs 460).

In his analysis of the Industrial Revolution, Tombs also addresses the transformative effects on the English economy and society. With the rise of factories, products could be created faster and sold cheaper than they could before the industrial era. Cottage industries and artisans would work slowly, by hand, to create a single product. Factories used machines to mass-produce items that could be sold to a greater market area. Railroads provided the mode of transportation both for the raw materials (and employees) to be transported to the industrial centers and for the finished products to be distributed throughout the country – or to ports, from which the products could be shipped overseas (Tombs 458-461, 486-487). This mass production of cheap goods would inspire William Morris and other members of the Arts and Crafts movement to resume hand-crafting items of personal and domestic use. Morris, in particular, researched and adopted outmoded methods of artisanal production as a form of resistance to mass production and escalating consumerism (“William Morris and Historical Design”).

The lives of the working-class were not simply changed regarding their sources of income; their lives were completely upended. Factory production was non-stop; there were no annual cycles of planting and harvesting. Whereas farming and production in cottage industries had been project-oriented, work in factories was measured by the clock (Tombs 409, 432). With an endless supply of workers laboring on coal- and steam-powered machines, factories could run all day long – or even around the clock. Early attempts at regulating working conditions included the Health and Morals of Apprentices

Act (1802) and the Cotton Mills Act (1819). Both acts were supported by Robert Peel, MP, himself a wealthy factory owner. However, neither act was enforceable – particularly as the inspectors were frequently friends of, or bribed by, less altruistic factory owners (Early Factory Legislation). No practical support was given for regulating working conditions until the Factory Act of 1833 for the simple reason that the technology and industries grew quickly – more quickly than Parliament could legislate. Prior to the Factory Act of 1833, there had been no maximum limit on working hours, nor any minimum age for child laborers (Tombs 438).

Some of the conditions of the Factory Act of 1833 were:

1. No children under the age of nine were permitted to work.
2. Children between the ages of nine and thirteen were not permitted to work more than nine hours each day, and no more than 48 hours each week. These children were also required to attend two hours of school each day.
3. Children between the ages of 13-18 were not permitted to work more than twelve hours each day.
4. Children were not permitted to work at night (8:30pm-5:30am).
5. Employers were required to have documented proof of a child's age.
6. A small group of inspectors, responsible for inspecting all factories was created. It was not large enough to inspect all the factories, but it was the first time the government assumed responsibility for upholding these laws (1833 Factory Act).

Subsequent workers' rights and protections were created in an industry-specific fashion, with laws regulating the working conditions of women, of factory workers, and of miners. Although the Factory Act stipulated the need for education, there was little guidance provided until the Education Act of 1870 (Tombs 469).

The Irish Question: Unification with Ireland and Catholic Emancipation

Robert Tombs summarizes the historical and legislative complexities of the unification of Ireland and Great Britain. The Acts of Union were two acts, passed through the respective Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland, that merged the two countries and created the United Kingdom of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The Union, which was effective on January 1, 1801, formalized British rule over Ireland. At the time, Ireland's population (5.5 million) was mostly Catholic, but only the Protestant minority had full citizenship rights. Formalizing Ireland as an equal partner with England, Wales, and Scotland was seen as a way of granting citizenship to Catholics and fending off French support for Ireland (Tombs 395). The population of (predominantly Protestant) Great Britain was 10.5 million, nearly twice that of Ireland; allowing Catholics the vote in the United Kingdom would not threaten the rule of the Protestant rulers. In the negotiations prior to drafting the Acts of Union, British Parliament had promised full citizenship rights to Irish Catholics, but George III vetoed that stipulation (Tombs 395). As both the monarch of Great Britain and the head of the Church of England, George III was concerned that Irish Catholics would not accept his rule as a divine right, and would work to overthrow both his political and religious rule (Tombs 395). Therefore, although the adopted Acts of Union granted Irish Protestants the right to

vote in UK elections (based upon their status as landholders) by the Acts of Union, Irish Catholics were not granted the right to vote until 1829 (Tombs 395).

The restrictions on Catholics in Great Britain had been enacted following King Henry VIII's break from the Roman Catholic Church in 1533. These restrictions were expanded through the rules of successive monarchs (excepting Queen Mary I), and remained the law of the land for centuries. Catholics in England did not have the right to worship, nor even to live in London until 1791; the United Kingdom would not grant emancipation to Catholics until 1829. Under the auspices of the Catholic Relief Act of 1829, Catholic residents of the United Kingdom could vote and hold seats in the House of Commons (Religion and Belief). However, the compromise made in Parliament actually reduced the numbers of Catholics who were eligible to vote (compared with the number who could have voted in Ireland prior to the Acts of Union) by increasing the amount of land a man would need to own in order to be eligible to vote (Tombs 440).

Nearly 100 years later, Ireland would fight for, and eventually win, independence from the United Kingdom.

The Reform Act of 1832 and Chartism

Scottish historian Gordon Kerr addresses The Reform Act of 1832 in his book, *A Short History of the Victorian Era*. Calls for political representation had spurred the American and French Revolutions, both of which had been costly for Great Britain. The cost, however, was not limited to the lives and money lost on military endeavors and loss of colonial income; the social revolutions of those two countries also stirred the revolutionary sentiments of the British populace. The growing call for universal (male)

suffrage was sounding throughout Europe, and people without political representation were making their voices heard. The Catholic Relief Act of 1829 provided mixed success to Catholics throughout the United Kingdom (Tombs 395, Kerr 14). It also contributed to the groundswell for those seeking greater reform in representation.

Economic recession, protests, and riots in the early 1830s forced Parliament to address the issues causing civil unrest. The passage of the Reform Act of 1832 was a drawn-out, highly charged work of legislation. It took nearly two years in Parliament: prolonged debates and multiple revisions in both Houses and their respective committees, several resignations, the death of George IV, the election of a new government, and two failed drafts of the act. Finally, in June, the Reform Act of 1832 was made law when William IV assented to it.

The Reform Act had many provisions regarding representation in Parliament and electoral issues. The two most important provisions are those that address the redistricting of representation and those that grant voting rights to renters. Members of Parliament were elected to represent the population in districts known as “boroughs.” These boroughs had been defined hundreds of years prior. Over time, and due to the movement of people, the population of the boroughs changed. Some boroughs had dwindled down to a tiny number of people, and were called “rotten boroughs.” Conversely, urban centers had experienced a population boom, but their representation had not changed. The Reform Act of 1832 addressed and reduced the number of rotten boroughs and increased the representation for areas that had population growth. In addition, voting rights were extended to men who owned modest properties and to men who rented properties. The requirements for renters still carried stipulations regarding

the value of the property rented as well as the terms of the lease. Therefore, the Reform Act of 1832 made representation more equitable, and extended voting privileges to many; however, suffrage was still not universal, and voting rights were not extended to women (Kerr 12-22).

The Chartist movement, usually considered a working-class movement, developed soon after as what would now be termed a grassroots movement. Proponents of Chartism argued that the reforms espoused in the Reform Act of 1832 were insufficient to achieve a truly representative government. Multiple groups protested and petitioned to expand voting rights. The People's Charter of 1838 articulated the six most requested goals of the disparate groups and crystallized support for a single cohesive movement. Those six goals were:

1. Universal manhood suffrage
2. Voting by secret ballot
3. Annual Parliamentary elections
4. Constituencies of equal size
5. Members of Parliament should be paid
6. Abolishing property qualifications for Members of Parliament. ("The Chartist Movement")

During the period when the Chartist movement was most active (1838-1848), the United Kingdom was experiencing an economic depression; this contributed to the political and social unrest of the time. Although Chartism began as a peaceful movement and remained predominantly so, several demonstrations turned violent and even deadly ("Chartist Riots"). Participants who were convicted of violence and insurrection were

imprisoned. The People's Charter gathered over a million signatures and was eventually presented in Parliament. Despite – or, perhaps, due to – popular national support, the People's Charter never earned enough votes in Parliament to be passed into law. The Chartist movement declined after 1848. Although the People's Charter had not been adopted into law, the Chartist movement made it clear that there was great public support for universal male suffrage and continued electoral reform. Some of the six goals of chartism (e.g., universal male suffrage, further reformation of rotten boroughs and unequal representation) were eventually codified by Parliament, but these changes took decades. The Representation of the People Act of 1918 codified universal suffrage for males over the age of 21 and for women over the age of 30 who met a minimum property qualification. Women in the United Kingdom were granted the same voting rights as men under the Equal Franchise Act of 1928 (“Women Get the Vote”).

The Poor Law of 1834 and Workhouses

Financial support for the impoverished was established with the first Poor Law in 1601. Under the Elizabethan Poor Law, church parishes were responsible for raising alms to assist the “deserving” poor – either those who lost work through no fault of their own, or those who were unable to work. Family members were expected to be responsible for each other. If possible, the poor were to be supported living in their own homes. If that was not possible, the poor would live in almshouses. Anyone who was physically able to work was required to do so, even if this meant working at something unfamiliar or unpleasant (Bloy, “The 1601 Elizabethan Poor Law”).

As the population increased, so too did the spending on the poor. According to Gordon Kerr, “By the early 1830s, spending on the Poor Law had rocketing, hitting seven million pounds sterling. A Royal Commission declared that too much was being spent on poor relief and that the system was unwieldy” (Kerr 27). The Poor Law of 1834 did indeed reduce the money spent on the poor. It did so by reducing the conditions and provisions provided to the poor who were considered able-bodied. The almshouses, also known as workhouses, forced the poor to live and work in horrific conditions (Bloy, “The Implementation of the Poor Law”). These workhouses were similar to debtors’ prisons; the belief was that by limiting the assistance given to the able-bodied and their families, and forcing them to work and live in deplorable conditions, those individuals would be compelled to work harder to escape poverty (Poor Law Reform). Charles Dickens’s childhood experiences with the deprivations of the workhouse would color his writings about poverty and social justice, through his careers both as a journalist and as a novelist.

The 1840s: Economic Crisis and Famine

Due to a confluence of events – poor harvests, Corn Laws, economic depression, burgeoning population, and the Great Potato Famine – unfathomable amounts of deprivation, disease, and death befell the United Kingdom in the 1840s. Historian Gordon Kerr (54) refers to the 1840s as “The Hungry Decade.” Robert Tombs explains that the term

The Hungry Forties – a term invented retrospectively during the anti-protectionist campaign of the 1900s – saw a Europe-wide economic slump of extreme severity. Beginning in 1846, this was a combination of the last of the age-old dearths

caused by harvest failures and the first great global financial panic. . .This gave rise to an acute sense of change and crisis, inspiring both utopian hopes and a sense of dread. (451)

The Corn Laws had been enacted in 1815 to protect the interests of farmers in the United Kingdom. The laws placed tariffs and restrictions on imported grains (wheat, barley, oats) in order to eliminate competition for the products of domestic farmers. This allowed the wealthy, landowning farmers to dictate prices, and restricted the ability of the poor, working, and middle classes to purchase grains.

During the time of the Corn Laws, Ireland grew increasingly dependent upon potatoes as an inexpensive source of nutrition for people and for livestock. Having ceded autonomy in the Acts of Union, the Irish had been bereft of their most fertile lands in order to grow the crops and livestock demanded by the government, the markets, and by the wealthy colonizing British. Potatoes could grow in poor soil conditions, keep after harvest for up to a year, and were a critical food source in the winter, especially for the poor.

A blight, originally from North America, wiped out the European potato crops in 1845 and 1846. The Corn Laws were repealed, and the government purchased imported grains to feed the Irish. However, over one million Irish – approximately twelve percent of the population – starved to death during the famine. Another million left Ireland, many emigrating to North America. During a ten-year period (1845-1855), the Irish population decreased by approximately 25% (Kerr 90). Ireland, and the Irish, were forever changed by the Great Famine – not the least of which was the growing animosity towards the English, Isle of Great Britain, and the government in London.

Literary History

M. H. Abrams was an American author, editor, and literary critic; he edited *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, which is a standard college textbook for courses in English literature. Much of his work in literary criticism focused on the writers of English Romanticism. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), considered the founder of liberal feminism, was inspired by Locke, Rousseau, Paine, and the ideals of the Enlightenment (Abrams 109-110). Wollstonecraft was most active as an author in the final ten years of her life, which occurred during the French Revolution. Her writings addressed the concepts of universal rights of men, and applied those same concepts to the rights of women (Abrams 110-111). Her best-known work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, was written in 1792, only two years after her first treatise, *A Vindication of the Rights of Man*. Wollstonecraft's writings were overshadowed by her reputation; she was thoroughly castigated for her nontraditional life choices – including travelling through France during the Revolution with Gilbert Imlay, the American businessman who fathered her first child. In his biography, William Godwin wrote about Wollstonecraft's belief in free love, her relationships with married men, her two children conceived out of wedlock by two different fathers. Although he sought to provide an honest tribute to his late wife, Godwin's biography turned much of the reading public against Wollstonecraft. Her reputation was destroyed and her writings were excoriated (Abrams 111-112). In Georgian England, a woman's sexuality was given greater consideration than her intellect.

English Romanticism (c. 1790-1825) developed through a confluence of two events: through reactions to the ideals of the Enlightenment and reactions to the French

Revolution. Romantic poets provided a counterpoint to the more logic-driven ideology of the Enlightenment, and addressed the necessity of natural beauty, of inspiration, and of emotions (Abrams 1-18).

At first, the early Romantic writers supported the French Revolution. However, the Romantics grew disillusioned as the French Revolution dragged on, became more violent, and evolved into the Napoleonic Empire. The poet William Blake (1757-1827) published his collection, *Songs of Innocence*, in 1790, during the initial days of the French Revolution. Five years later, prompted by the Reign of Terror, he revisited the themes of *Songs of Innocence*, and produced *Songs of Innocence and of Experience, Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*, a more somber, jaded response to his earlier collection (Abrams 21). Early Romantic poets, such as William Blake (1757-1827), William Wordsworth (1770-1850), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), Robert Southey, and Charles Lamb, were disenchanted with the failures of the French Revolution. Later Romantic poets, such as John Keats (1795-1821), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), and George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824), were similarly affected by the Napoleonic Empire and their travels through Europe following the Napoleonic Wars. The young novelist, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (1797-1851), travelled throughout Europe with her lover, Percy Shelley, in a fashion similar to the travels taken by her mother during the Revolution. Mary Godwin (later Shelley) began her most famous work, *Frankenstein*, on the shores of Lake Geneva in 1816 (Abrams 878). Keats died of tuberculosis in Rome in 1821; Shelley drowned off the coast of Italy in 1822. Byron remained faithful to the Romantic ideals of self-determination and

passion; he joined the Greek in their War of Independence from the Ottoman Empire, and died of fever and sepsis in Greece in 1824 (Abrams 506).

The Romantic Poets who were still living during the reign of William IV (1830-1837) were in their waning years; they wrote less and grew more conservative. Robert Southey was Poet Laureate for thirty years from 1813 until his death in 1843. William Wordsworth became Poet Laureate in 1843, although he wrote little during that time. Wordsworth died in 1850, shortly after his eightieth birthday. The preeminent Victorian poet, Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), succeeded Wordsworth as Poet Laureate.

Tennyson's poetry was a critical link between the works of the Romantic period and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. His writing was full of rich visual imagery, as the Romantics had used. Similarly, his work inspired both the art and poetry of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Tennyson had showed an early predilection for writing; his first collection, a collaboration with his brother, was published when they were teenagers. As a twenty-year-old student at Cambridge (Byron's alma mater), Tennyson was awarded the Chancellor's Gold Medal for his poem, "Timbuktu" (Leadbetter).

Tennyson had published collections of poetry in 1830, 1833, and 1842. Two edited versions of his "The Lady of Shalott" appeared in his 1833 and 1842 collections. This poem was a key theme and recurring topic for the works of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. "The Lady of Shalott" was about a woman who lived in Arthurian times, cursed to live in a tower removed from the world, unable to even look directly out her windows to the people outside. One day, hearing Lancelot nearby, she is tempted to look out her window, then realizes that she has been cursed to die shortly. She descends the tower and climbs in to a nearby boat, then drifts downriver to Camelot, singing as she

dies. This poem inspired multiple paintings, including three paintings by John William Waterhouse (1888, 1894, 1915) and one by William Holman Hunt (1888-1905).

While at Cambridge, Tennyson had formed a close friendship with classmate Arthur Henry Hallam; Hallam became engaged to Tennyson's sister. Hallam's sudden death at age 22 affected Tennyson deeply. Tennyson published one of his most famous works, *In Memoriam A.H.H.* in 1850. The imagery and emotion used in the epic poem led readers to believe that the narrator was a widow, writing about her husband who had been lost at sea. Following the death of Prince Albert in 1862, Queen Victoria kept a copy of *In Memoriam* near her bedside. She noted in her journal that the poem comforted her ("*In Memoriam A.H.H.* by Alfred Lord Tennyson"). She was so moved by the poem that she requested meetings with Tennyson; in those meetings, she admitted that the poem had comforted her following the death of her husband, Prince Albert, in 1862 ("*Queen Victoria's album consolativum*").

Tennyson became Poet Laureate in 1850, and held that title until his own death in 1892. He was the longest-serving Poet Laureate in the history of the United Kingdom, and the first poet to be awarded a peerage. He was made the first Lord Tennyson in 1883, and took his seat in the House of Lords. Tennyson is among the pantheon of poets, if not the preeminent poet of the Victorian era.

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) was one of the most popular and prolific novelists of the Victorian Era. During his childhood, Dickens's father was confined to a debtors' prison, and young Charles was sent to a workhouse. His experiences during that time – separated from his family, working long days on menial tasks in squalid conditions – affected him deeply. Those experiences informed his writings that addressed the social

crises of early Victorian England: poverty, poor working conditions, exploitation of children, class warfare, social stigmas. After his father left the debtors' prison (due to an inheritance following the death of his own mother), young Charles remained in the service of the workhouse for months longer. He blamed his mother for his delay in returning to his family, and his attitude regarding his mother impacted his accounts of women in his fiction (Wilson 58).

As a young adult, Dickens began working as a law clerk, and then transitioned to working as a political reporter, assigned to report on Parliament. While still in his twenties, Dickens turned his full focus to writing fiction. The social commentaries of his fiction, more than his journalism, impacted public awareness of poverty and the injustices that beset the working class. Dickens published much of his work in serial format; after all of the installments were published in periodical, the installments would then be edited together for publication as a single book. This serial format can be seen as the source of Dickens's popularity and success. As the cost of a weekly or monthly serial was significantly lower than the cost of a book, the serial format was more affordable – and therefore more accessible to the working and middle classes (Howsam).

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period of monumental change in the United Kingdom. The early days of the Industrial Revolution altered the United Kingdom irrevocably, and led to changes in the political, social, and economic structures and practices of the time. The country became more industrial than agrarian, and more urban than rural. These changes affected almost every aspect of daily life for the entire

population, and seemed to increase in both sheer number and magnitude at an accelerating rate.

While the population was swept up – or under – by the tsunami of changes, the impact of the Industrial Revolution was questioned and challenged. Philosophers, politicians, poets, and artists in the United Kingdom and beyond both looked back on the world that was lost and forward to the unknown that was taking shape. It is in this era that a small group of writers and artists formed a collaborative, articulated and codified their goals and aesthetics, and chose their own name: the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

CHAPTER TWO: A SHORT-LIVED BROTHERHOOD WITH LONG-TERM IMPACT

At its most specific definition, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood refers to a group of seven men who formed an artistic collaborative that was active for three years (1848-1851). By agreement, these seven men all signed work exhibited during that time with the initials “PRB,” rather than using their own names (Hartley 173). After the collaborative dissipated in 1851, the term “Pre-Raphaelite” remained, and was used to describe the work of both the original members and of followers who were faithful to the style and goals of the Brotherhood. Although the terms “Pre-Raphaelites” and “Pre-Raphaelite Movement” are currently used to describe the larger movement, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood can only be used in reference to the seven founders: James Collinson, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Michael Rossetti, Frederic George Stephens, and Thomas Woolner. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood launched an extraordinary movement not simply because they opposed the predominant artistic movements of the era, but because they did so deliberately. By choosing their own name, and codifying their goals, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood exerted a level of control over their legacy. By articulating their goals and aesthetics, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood impacted the arts in multiple fields, well beyond the dissolution of their original group.

In 1848, the year when the Brotherhood was formed, Queen Victoria marked the eleventh year of her reign. The Hungry Forties were winding down, at least in England (Tombs 451). According to Kerr, the entire Irish potato crop was destroyed for three consecutive years (1845-1848); by 1855, almost a million people (nearly twelve percent

of the population) had died from the famine, and another million and a half emigrated (Kerr 67-68). The Industrial Revolution was in full swing. The Chartist movement was in its waning days. Charles Dickens and Alfred Tennyson were the two most popular writers of the time. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published *The Communist Manifesto* in London in February, although it remained relatively unknown for twenty years. In Europe, a wave of revolutions would sweep through several countries; as a result of France's revolution of 1848, the grandson of Napoleon Bonaparte would begin his rule as the first President of France.

In stark contrast to the upheaval of the time was the Royal Academy of Art. Founded eighty years prior, in 1768, by a group of thirty-six artists who successfully petitioned King George III for the right to establish an independent "society for promoting the Arts of Design" ("A Brief History of the RA"). Membership was only extended to practicing visual artists of painting and sculpture. Although there were two female artists among the original 36 charter members, no other women were granted full membership until 1936 ("A Brief History of the RA"). From the time of its inception, the decisions of the Royal Academy consistently influenced the contemporary perception of art: membership, students who were admitted, and work that was displayed. Even John Everett Millais, one of the youngest students ever to be admitted to the Royal Academy (at age eleven), was subject to public criticism in 1850 – from no less a cultural icon than Charles Dickens – when his work *Christ in the House of His Parents* defied the convention of the time (Turner). In *The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition: A Chronicle 1769-2018*, Sarah Victoria Turner wrote that "The Academy could also be an arena of cultural combat, where critics waged war with words and artists shot back,

sending their works into the fray year on year” (Turner). It is in that environment that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had been formed.

The Royal Academy provided the meeting venue for the first three members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; in all, six of the seven members would be affiliated with the Royal Academy at some point in their lives. The Royal Academy website provides a history of the institution, including biographies of these six artists and their student experiences, which contributed to the founding of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (“A Brief History of the RA”). John Everett Millais (1829-1896) was admitted to the Royal Academy at the age of eleven. He maintained his membership in the Royal Academy for the rest of his life, and became President of the Royal Academy in 1896, shortly before his death. According to Abrams (1488-1489), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) was the son of Gabriele Pasquale Giuseppe Rossetti, an exiled Italian poet and scholar. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, like his siblings, had been educated at home in his childhood. From 1837-1841, he went on to study at the public school where his father taught. He then devoted himself to the study of art, and was accepted into the Royal Academy in 1845; he rebelled against the methodology and aesthetics, and left. Upon leaving the Academy in 1848, Rossetti began receiving instruction from Ford Madox Brown, who remained a supporter for the rest of Rossetti’s life. William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) had first met Millais in an informal sketching group, but then became more closely associated with Millais during their time together at the Royal Academy. When he first applied to the Royal Academy, Hunt had originally been denied admission, but was later admitted. When Rossetti saw Hunt’s incomplete painting *The Eve of Saint Agnes* on exhibition, they began a correspondence; the two then began a shared living arrangement. Shortly

after, Hunt also rebelled against the constraints of the Academy, and left (“A Brief History of the RA”).

The Brotherhood was formed in a meeting at Millais’s family house in 1848. At that point, Rossetti had left the Royal Academy, and Hunt was to leave shortly after. William Rossetti would show his contempt for the Royal Academy when describing the initial formation and motivation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood:

In 1848 the British School of Painting was in anything but a vital or a lively condition. One very great and incomparable genius, Turner, belonged to it. He was old and past his executive prime. . . . There were in the late summer of 1848, in the Schools of the Royal Academy or barely emergent from them, four young men to whom this condition of the art seemed offensive, contemptible, and even scandalous. (Rossetti)

After the initial meeting of Millais, Hunt, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Kerr 84), they invited other artists to join their group. Ford Madox Brown declined the invitation, but remained a supporter of the group. The other four men who joined the group were James Collinson, William Michael Rossetti, Friedrich George Stephens, and Thomas Woolner (Landow).

James Collinson (1825-1881) studied at the Royal Academy with Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Holman Hunt (“A Brief History of the RA”). He was engaged to Christina Rossetti (sister of Dante Gabriel and William Michael Rossetti), but the engagement was broken and the two never married. Collinson left the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1850, when Millais’s work *Christ in the House of His Parents* (1850) was exhibited and became the target of criticism. William Michael Rossetti (1829-1919), the

brother of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, was employed as a government clerk, and developed a career as a prolific writer and art critic. He kept notes from all of the meetings of the Brotherhood, and edited *The Germ*, the magazine of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which ceased publication after four editions. William Rossetti would remain unflinchingly outspoken for the duration of his life regarding the artwork he critiqued. Friedrich George Stephens (1827-1907) entered the Royal Academy in 1844, and met Millais and Hunt. Stephens joined the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848, but soon gave up art and became an art critic; later in life, he became an art historian (“A Brief History of the RA”). Thomas Woolner (1825-1892) was the only sculptor among the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (“Thomas Woolner”). After exhibiting works at the Royal Academy, he met Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Although his aesthetics were not completely in line with those agreed upon by the rest of the Brotherhood, Woolner remained supportive of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and of the later Pre-Raphaelite movement. Woolner was also a poet and art dealer, and later became a professor of sculpture at the Royal Academy (“A Brief History of the RA”).

Fifty years later, William Michael Rossetti would describe the Brotherhood thus:

Being little more than lads, these young men were naturally not very deep in either the theory or the practice of art: but they had open eyes and minds, and could discern that some things were good and other bad—that some things they liked, and others they hated. They hated the lack of ideas in art, and the lack of character; the silliness and vacuity which belong to the one, the flimsiness and make-believe which result from the other. They hated those forms of execution which are merely smooth and prettyish,

and those which, pretending to mastery, are nothing better than slovenly and slapdash, or what the P.R.B.'s called "sloshy." (Rossetti)

The formation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was inspired, in part, by a German Romantic group of artists known as the Nazarenes (McGann). Started forty years prior, in 1809, the goal of this group of artists was to reform German art by returning to the style of art of the medieval and early Renaissance era. The six artists who started the group had met while attending the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Although the group had originally dubbed themselves the Brotherhood of St. Luke, in reference to the patron saint of art, they became known as the Nazarenes due to their focus on religious topics ("Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde"). They formed a collaborative and moved to Rome, where they lived in an abandoned monastery, in an effort to revisit the lifestyle of a medieval artists' collaborative. By 1830, the Nazarenes were no longer active as a group; most of them had returned to Germany, and were teaching in the formal art academies they had originally derided. Two English painters who were educated on the continent brought their knowledge of the Nazarene movement back to the United Kingdom with them. Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893), taught and openly supported the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and Fredrich Leighton (1830-1896), would become a Pre-Raphaelite artist, best known for his work *Flaming June*.

The members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood not only chose the name of their group, but also thoughtfully articulated the goals and aesthetics. This is a marked difference from most other artistic movements that are usually named and defined by external observers, art critics, or historians (e.g., the Brotherhood of St. Luke being

renamed “The Nazarenes”). In documenting their discussions, William Michael Rossetti wrote that the goals of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood are:

1. to have genuine ideas to express;
2. to study Nature attentively, so as to know how to express them;
3. to sympathise with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote;
4. and most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues. (Rossetti)

In other words, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood strove “to elevate the ordinary;” to show (through both writing and visual art) the beauty in aspects of nature, everyday objects, and occurrences. This aesthetic would influence artists for more than another half-century, from the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood through the later Pre-Raphaelite Movement, through the Arts and Crafts work and writings of William Morris, and by Art Nouveau artists such as Alfonse Mucha.

The name “Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood” was chosen because the members wanted to revert to the aesthetics and methods of art that preceded the art of the High Renaissance. Stylistically, the Brotherhood chose to copy the Italian art of the fourteenth century, and sought to reform Victorian-era art by rejecting the influences of Classical artists such as Raphael (1483-1520) and Michelangelo (1475-1564). William Michael Rossetti would later write,

It would be a mistake to suppose, because they called themselves Præraphaelites, that they seriously disliked the works produced by

Raphael; but they disliked the works produced by Raphael's uninspired satellites, and were resolved to find out, by personal study and practice, what their own several faculties and adaptabilities might be, without being bound by rules and big-wiggeries founded upon the performance of Raphael or of any one. They were to have no master except their own powers of mind and hand, and their own first-hand study of Nature.

(Rossetti)

Thematically, the Brotherhood had a wide range of topics that included figures from Christianity, mythology, poetry, and daily life. They also identified specific artists they held in high regard; the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood some of the writers' works provided inspiration for discussion, criticism, and their own artworks. According to Dinah Roe, a specialist in Victorian poetry who writes for the British Library,

In 1848, Rossetti and Holman Hunt drew up a list of 'Immortals', or artistic heroes, which included not only canonical writers such as Homer, Dante Alighieri and Boccaccio, but also recent predecessors and contemporaries such as Byron, Keats, Shelley, Longfellow, Emerson, Poe, Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, Robert Browning and Thackeray. ("The Pre-Raphaelites")

In her article, "Putting the Drama Into Everyday Life: The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and a Very Ordinary Aesthetic," Lucy Hartley details their aesthetic and its reasoning, as defined in the writings of William Michael Rossetti. Hartley's argument is "that the PRB in general. . .advocated an aesthetic based on the fundamental nobility of the expressions, gestures, and actions of everyday life" (Hartley 173). These principles

espoused introspection, reflection, and collaboration. As part of their commitment to collaboration, the seven members of the Brotherhood all signed their works with the initials “PRB,” having previously agreed to keep their individual identities secret (Hartley 173).

She further elaborates (177) that “many of the literary expositions of these ideas can be found in the PRB journal, *The Germ: Thoughts Towards Nature in Art and Poetry*,” and cites a passage by John Tupper as the “aesthetic slogan for the group: ‘fine art delights us from its being the semblance of what in nature delights us.’” To this end, the study of nature included the study of human anatomy. Such a practice was hardly new; daVinci had dissected corpses in the early sixteenth century in order to better understand human anatomy. However, the study of nature, and of anatomy in particular, was the target of criticism. Hartley cites “a large number of negative reviews of PRB paintings” to illustrate “the strength of feeling against the PRB” (180). Their artwork was criticized as being banal, as being too scientific, too focused on “morbid anatomy.”

Hartley explains that, for many art critics of the mid-nineteenth century, “art draws ‘exalted sentiment’ from the ‘most beautiful body,’” and that

nobility in painting meant the expression of a superior conception of mind and body through ideal forms, which generalized expressions of emotion to serve the demands of a heroic style. Instead of art recording, quite literally, the perfections and imperfections of nature, we are encouraged to believe in a straight-forwardly Platonic world of ideal forms that it is the purpose of paintings to exemplify. (Hartley 180-181)

Hartley makes it clear that the aesthetics of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood were not in concert with the perception of “nobility in painting” that was common in the mid-nineteenth century. The members of the Brotherhood strove to “elevate the ordinary,” by faithfully reflecting what they had observed in Nature. The resulting artwork was derided in an era that preferred idealized, stylized renditions of their subjects. To apply the language of Plato’s Allegory of the Cave, the Pre-Raphaelites, according to their aesthetics, were focused on the figures by the fire, whereas the more popular Victorian artists were focused on the shadows on the walls of the cave.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was only active as a group for three years, and, due to that short span of time, its seven members produced a small number of works during those three years. These works were important not only in their own right, but also because they provided a foundation for the larger Pre-Raphaelite movement and, by extension, the Arts and Crafts movement. In addition to the paintings and sculptures created by the Brotherhood, they also collaborated to publish a short-lived periodical: *The Germ: Thoughts Towards Nature in Art and Literature*. The collaborative nature of the Brotherhood was clear in the publication of *The Germ*. Members not only provided writings and artwork for *The Germ*, but also illustrated the works of other Brothers; for instance, William Holman Hunt created a two-panel illustration of Woolner’s poem, *My Beautiful Lady*, for the first volume.

The Germ was edited by William Michael Rossetti, and included poetry, prose, art criticism, essays, and sketches. In addition to works by the seven members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, *The Germ* also included contributions from others such as Christina Rossetti and Ford Madox Brown. There were four editions published in the

first four months of 1850, but due to the low number of sales, continuing publication was not financially feasible. Although *The Germ* was not successful in 1850, it was reprinted in 1901 – with an introduction and lengthy additional commentary by William Michael Rossetti. At that point, William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) and Friedrich George Stephens (1827-1907) were the only other living members of the original Brotherhood. As the introduction and additional editorializing were written in the first person, it does not appear that William Michael Rossetti collaborated with Hunt or Stephens in the updated work.

Jerome McGann is a literary scholar who, over the course of fifteen years (1993-2008), built rossettiarchive.org, a complete online collection of the works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. This collection includes his writings as well as his artwork, and includes analyses on selected materials. All four editions of *The Germ* are available through this website. Regarding *The Germ*, McGann writes that

The Germ was the organ for disseminating the work and ideas of the initial Pre-Raphaelite circle. . . .Pervading the journal is a loosely defined but unmistakable [sic] set of religious goals, as well as a closely related conviction that art and literature are the vehicles that can be most relied upon to secure those goals. The journal recurs to subjects like early Italian painting, medieval topoi of various kinds, and discussions of the relation between early and contemporary art and literature. The latter are particularly revealing. . . .*The Germ* was an instrument toward those ends. It consisted of both verse and prose (the latter both fictional and expository). Only four numbers were published (January, February,

March, and May, 1850). Discontinued when it proved a financial failure, it had a significant influence, and eventually its importance came to be widely recognized. (McGann)

If the Brotherhood's belief in the intersection of art and nature sounds similar to English Romantic ideals, it is no accident. The members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (and later Pre-Raphaelites) drew inspiration from several favorite subjects, including the English Romantic poets; Keats, Shelley, and Byron were among their list of "immortals." Other favored subjects included legends from Christianity and ancient mythology, medieval culture, and the natural world. These subjects provided the inspiration for the following selection of art, produced by the members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood during their short period of collaborative activity. The following four works are representative of the Brotherhood's focus on subjects that are centuries old, each with an element (or elements) developed from their own articulated ethics and aesthetics. The intersection of new treatments and old themes, as well as public access and reaction to those works, will be explored in future chapters that address the works of Morris and Mucha.



Figure 1. *Isabella* (1848-1849) by John Everett Millais.

John Everett Millais was the child prodigy who had been admitted to the Royal Academy at the age of eleven. Along with William Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, he became one of the founding members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. One significant painting completed by Millais in 1849 embodies several key ideals of the art of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. This painting is based upon the poem, “*Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*,” by Keats – which, in turn, had actually been based upon one of the tales in Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (1349-1353). In the poem, Isabella is in love with Lorenzo, who is employed by her wealthy family. When her brothers realize that the two are in love, they murder Lorenzo and bury his body; this is done so

they can enforce an arranged marriage for their sister to another wealthy family. Isabella finds Lorenzo's body, removes his head, and plants it in a pot of basil that she carries with her.

Millais's painting is set in a medieval style, according to the aesthetics agreed upon by the members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. In doing so, Millais pays homage both to the poem by Keats and the original story by Boccaccio. Millais painted his figures as flattened, and used thin layers of oil paints on canvas. The painting shows Isabella and Lorenzo to the right of center; her eyes are downcast, but Lorenzo looks directly at her as he offers her a cut orange. Isabella's two brothers sit to the left of center. One brother is scowling at a greyhound he has just kicked; the dog recoils away from him, and cowers towards the shelter of Isabella's lap. A second dog appears to be sleeping under the brother's chair. A second brother sits next to the first; the second brother is holding a glass of red wine, and seems focused on the interaction between Isabella and Lorenzo. The initials PRB are seen on the stool where Isabella sits, designed to appear carved into the wood. This painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1849. Twenty years later, William Holman Hunt would paint a different setting of the same poem, showing Isabella, alone, embracing the pot of basil that contains Lorenzo's head. For an audience to know the story behind the painting, that audience would have read either Keats's *Isabella and the Pot of Basil* (1818) or Boccaccio's *Decameron*, or, ideally, both. Even though more than half the adult population in the United Kingdom was literate in 1851, it is unlikely that a large portion of the population would have been familiar with either Keats or Boccaccio ("Charles Dickens and the Push for Literacy in

Victorian Britain”). Therefore, this work would have had a very limited appeal, even if it had been exhibited in a public forum.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the United Kingdom remained overwhelmingly Christian. The next two works, both by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, would have been easily recognized by the vast majority of the public – if the public had been allowed access. Both of these works were drawn from religious inspiration and focused on the figure of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ: *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1849) and *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (1850).

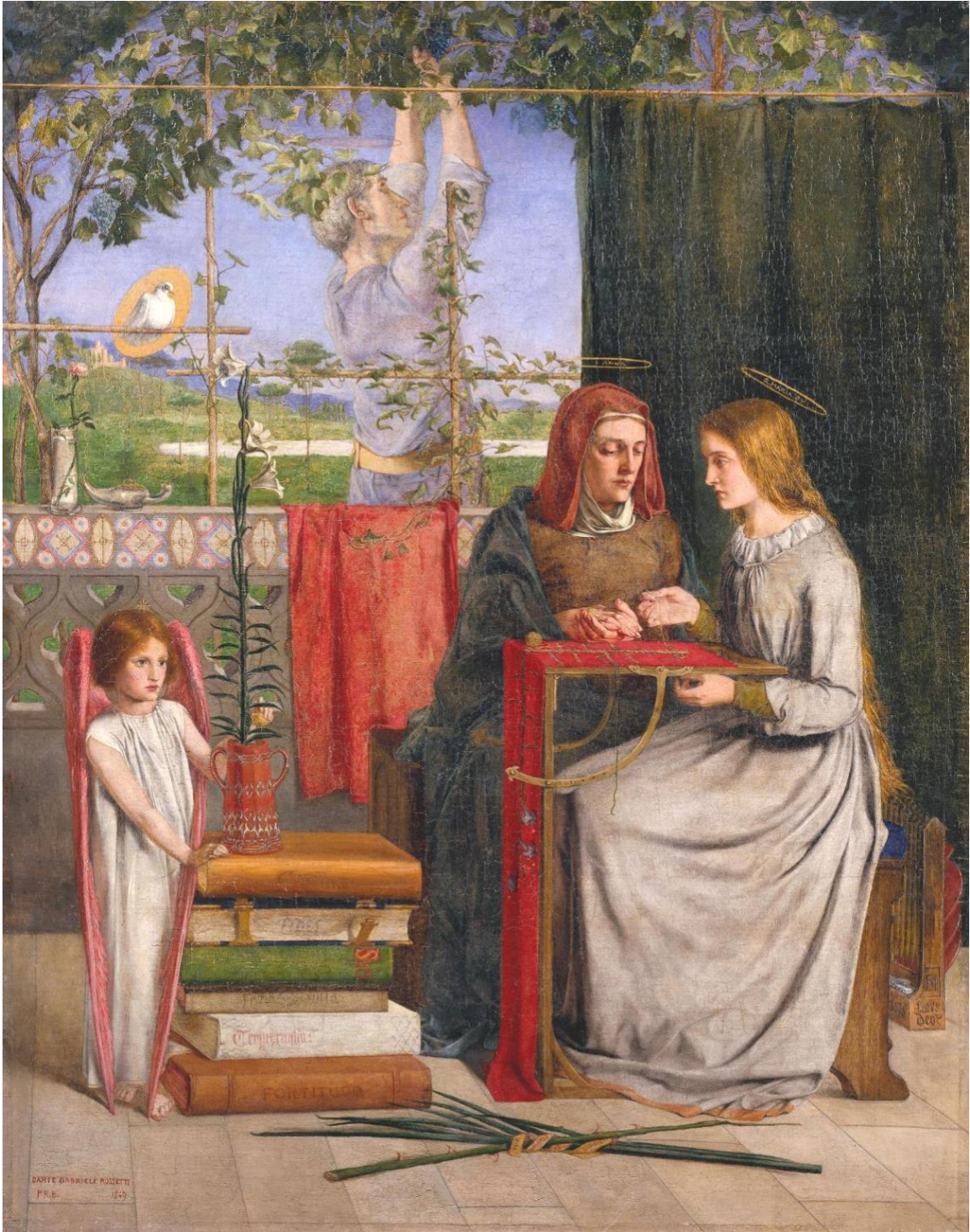


Figure 2. *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1848-1849) by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

This painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti was the first work to be exhibited with the “PRB” initials on it (“*The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*”), which he included under his name. His plan had originally been to submit the painting to the Royal Academy for a juried exhibition; instead, he submitted it to be displayed in a free (non-juried) exhibition in Hyde Park Corner Gallery (McGann). The painting was displayed with two sonnets that explained the Christian symbolism within the painting: the dove represented the Holy Spirit, the lilies held by the angel and in the embroidery represented the purity of Mary, the red cloth symbolized the blood of Christ, the palms and thorns on the floor represented Palm Sunday and Good Friday, and the cross-shaped trellis represented the crucifixion of Christ. In this work, Mary is embroidering while her mother, St. Anne, watches her hands. Mary embroiders white lilies on to a red cloth. An angel stands nearby, holding a stem of lilies that appear to be the model for Mary’s embroidery. In the background, Mary’s father, St. Joachim, prunes a vine.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti used his sister Christina and his mother Frances as the female models in the painting, and the family servant, William, is the model for St. Joachim. This practice, of using friends, partners, and family members as models, would become a hallmark of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Rather than painting important figures from politics, society, or religion, the artists would use figures they knew personally, or models from working-class backgrounds (such as Jane Burden and Elizabeth Siddal) in order to continue their desire to “elevate the ordinary.” This practice would also allow the artists to focus on Nature in the work (identified by William Michael Rossetti as the second goal of the Pre-Raphaelite

Brotherhood) and not feel conscribed to provide an exact or stylized portrait of a famous individual.

This painting was composed using layers of oil on canvas, using thin paintbrushes designed for watercolors. Rossetti had primed the canvas with white paint (McGann). Information about the location of the sonnets that accompanied the painting is conflicted. Some sources say that the sonnets were inscribed in the frame; others say that the sonnets were printed on gold paper and displayed next to the painting. As the painting was displayed in two different exhibitions and Rossetti himself both repainted and reframed the work in 1864, the conflicting reports are understandable (McGann). It is significant that Dante Gabriel Rossetti chose to present his poetry and painting together. A subject as well-known as the Holy Family would not have needed any explanation or illumination in nineteenth-century London. By virtue of the fact that Rossetti chose not only to create both painting and poetry, but also to display both together, he indicates that he has contributions to make to his contemporaries' discussions of the Holy Family. Like his brother the art critic, Dante Gabriel Rossetti is writing about art. Moreover, by displaying both together, the two art forms illuminate each other.



Figure 3. *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (1850) by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti revisited the life of Mary, and several other Christian symbols, in this work. This painting shows the Annunciation, the announcement of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary, informing her that she would conceive without sin and bear a son, Jesus Christ. This painting was also composed of oil on canvas. Dante Gabriel Rossetti used his sister Christina again as the model for Mary; his brother, William, is the model for the Archangel Gabriel.

Several elements reference his earlier painting, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*. The embroidery that was in progress in the earlier painting now hangs, completed, by Mary's bed. There is again a dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, featured in the painting. In both paintings, Mary is seen focused on a stem of white lilies that is held by an angel.

There are also several differences, both in the subject and the setting of the paintings. In *The Annunciation*, the color palette is much simpler. This painting is predominantly white; there are elements that are blue, which is a color associated in Christianity with Mary, and there is one red element, which is the embroidered work that hangs by her bedside. Both Mary and the archangel have golden or reddish hair. The archangel has yellow flames at his feet in lieu of the wings more frequently used to denote an angelic being. The space between the angel's feet and his shadow on the ground indicates that he hovers just above the floor, seemingly effortlessly.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti set the Annunciation in what appears to be Mary's bedroom. Whereas many other artworks show a joyful – or, at least, unruffled – Mary, often sporting a beatific smile, this Mary looks terrified. She's been startled in her bed, seemingly just awoken by this fiery-footed angel's presence in her room. Perhaps she had actually retreated to her bed to try to avoid the angel, his pronouncement, and the

view of his side through his gaping angelic raiment. In any case, this is no humble, willing servant of the Lord – this is a scared teenage girl.

Although this painting was completed in 1850, a year after *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, Rossetti did not include the PRB initials; this work was signed “DGR March 1850.” There was no recognition at all of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. This picture was exhibited in 1850 and roundly criticized (rossettiarchive.org). Rossetti decided that he would never again exhibit this work, and sold it to a supporter of the Pre-Raphaelites in 1853 (“*The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*”).



Figure 4. *Christ in the House of His Parents* (1850) by John Everett Millais.

The final work selected to illustrate the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's aesthetics is by John Everett Millais. It is considerably less esoteric than *Isabella*, and its accessibility may have led to its censure. This painting, *Christ in the House of His Parents*, is the work that both propelled the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood into the public eye and brought about the end of the Brotherhood.

In order to make this as realistic as possible – to focus on Nature – Millais had visited and observed a carpenter's shop, and used that shop as the model for this work (“Christ in the House of His Parents”). The lumber standing against the wall, the tools hanging on the wall, and the scraps and shavings of wood on the floor all showed the interior of a busy carpenter's shop. A carpenter was the model for the figure of Joseph, and Millais modeled the face of Joseph on that of his own father. The painting is also full of Christian symbolism. The injury to Jesus's hand, and the blood that has dripped on to his foot, foreshadow the wounds from his crucifixion. His cousin John, who will be known as The Baptist, carries in water to wash the wounds. The triangle on the wall represents the Holy Trinity, and the dove on the ladder represents the Holy Spirit. The sheep herded outside the shop foreshadow Jesus's moniker as the shepherd who will tend his flock.

This oil on canvas painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition of 1850. The response was overwhelmingly negative. This was no *tabula rasa*. Critics stated that it was inappropriate to show the Holy Family as a poor, working family, with dirty floors and wrinkled faces. The most virulent criticism came from no less a titan than Charles Dickens himself. In the June 1850 edition of *Household Words*, the journal Dickens edited, Dickens eviscerated the work, the artist, and the Pre-

Raphaelite Brotherhood. It is important to note how thoroughly Dickens criticized the work; he described this treatment of the Holy Family using some of the same imagery and language as he used to describe villains in his own stories. It is ironic that Dickens, who used his writing to shine a light on the humanity of the poor and oppressed, denigrated another artist's treatment of a family that is also without means.

You come, in this place, to the contemplation of a Holy Family. You will have the goodness to discharge from your minds all Post-Raphael ideas, all religious aspirations, all elevating thoughts, all tender, awful, sorrowful, ennobling, sacred, graceful, or beautiful associations, and to prepare yourselves, as befits such a subject Pre-Raphaelly considered for the lowest depths of what is mean, odious, repulsive, and revolting. You behold the interior of a carpenter's shop. In the foreground of that carpenter's shop is a hideous, wry-necked, blubbering, red-headed boy, in a bed-gown, who appears to have received a poke in the hand, from the stick of another boy with whom he has been playing in an adjacent gutter, and to be holding it up for the contemplation of a kneeling woman, so horrible in her ugliness, that (supposing it were possible for any human creature to exist for a moment with that dislocated throat) she would stand out from the rest of the company as a Monster, in the vilest cabaret in France, or the lowest ginshop in England. Two almost naked carpenters, master and journeyman, worthy companions of this agreeable female, are working at their trade; a boy, with some small flavor of humanity in him, is entering with a vessel of water; and nobody is paying any attention to a

snuffy old woman who seems to have mistaken that shop for the tobacconist's next door, and to be hopelessly waiting at the counter to be served with half an ounce of her favourite mixture. Wherever it is possible to express ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude, you have it expressed. Such men as the carpenters might be undressed in any hospital where dirty drunkards, in a high state of varicose veins, are received. (Dickens)

The condemnation of the painting, the artist, and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood led to the dissolution of the group. There was little in the writing and minutes of William Michael Rossetti that indicated that the Brotherhood had contemplated, much less anticipated, receiving criticism as scathing as Dickens's. This criticism was effectively the death blow of the Brotherhood. Around the same time as he joined the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, James Collinson converted from Catholicism to High Anglicanism in anticipation of his marriage to Christina Rossetti. Following the criticism of *Christ in the House of His Parents*, Collinson resigned his membership in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, as he believed that it had denigrated Christianity. He broke off his engagement to Christina Rossetti, returned to Catholicism, and entered a Jesuit seminary. He did not become a priest, and later married.

Following Collinson's departure from the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the remaining six members discussed the possible addition of a new member. No new member was added, and the group disbanded. They stopped using the initials PRB on their works, and drifted apart. All seven continued to be active in the arts, whether they did so through painting, sculpting, writing, or critiquing. Some (e.g., Collinson), moved

on to different styles, whereas others (Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Millais), maintained their commitment to the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics, and propelled the movement forward.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was a small group of artists, working as a group for a short period of time, with a limited amount of creative output during their collaborations. However, their impact was more far-reaching on the creative arts than their contemporary critics could have imagined. Due to their diligence in defining their artistic goals and articulating their aesthetics – embodied in the writings of William Michael Rossetti -- the effects of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood extended to the arts in multiple fields for decades beyond their group's dissolution. The creative output by these seven men in a three-year period is small, but their early work provided the basis for the larger movements that evolved. The works and writings of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood launched its members in to the public eye. A few years after the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood disbanded, a group of Oxford students formed their own Brotherhood. The Birmingham Set, as they originally called themselves, were influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The Birmingham Set, led by William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, read Tennyson, Shelley, Keats, Dickens, and Ruskin. Within five years, they would befriend Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and invite him to collaborate on their writing and painting endeavors.

CHAPTER THREE: END OF A BROTHERHOOD, BEGINNING OF A
MOVEMENT: THE PRE-RAPHAELITES GROW FAMOUS AND GAIN
LEGITIMACY

When Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents* was exhibited in 1850, it precipitated the end of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, as James Collinson left the group. However, the controversy arising from its exhibition was not purely negative. Due to the publicity, the Pre-Raphaelites vaulted from being an unknown artistic movement to achieving seemingly instant fame – and infamy. The number and caliber of artists who were drawn to the movement and began painting in the Pre-Raphaelite style insured that the movement would grow; its style would develop, and the name would be remembered long after the seven original members had died. The exhibition of Millais's controversial work brought about the end of the Brotherhood, but launched a movement with greater depth and impact than could have been foreseen by the original seven members. The Pre-Raphaelite movement that evolved from the Brotherhood continued the dialogue with the past: addressing ancient and historic subjects while using their own contemporary rationale and methodology for doing so, while underscoring the intersection of written and visual arts.

Charles Dickens's criticism of Millais's work made the Pre-Raphaelites famous. Queen Victoria had the painting brought to her, so she could view it in the privacy of Buckingham Palace. It also inspired John Ruskin, the artist and art critic, to defend and befriend the Pre-Raphaelites. His friendship with Millais would have unanticipated effects on their lives. Those effects, born at the junction of art and life, personal and

professional, would also be echoed in relationships shared by other Pre-Raphaelite artists, especially Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris.

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was an English philosopher, writer, and art critic. He led a privileged life, including an Oxford education and extensive travel throughout Great Britain and Europe. He wrote in a variety of modes, including essays, poetry, and even a fairy tale for the young Effie Gray, who would later become his wife. In a biography of Ruskin, published in conjunction with an exhibition marking the 100 year anniversary of his death, the Tate Britain examined Ruskin's impact as an art critic and patron ("Ruskin, Turner, and the Pre-Raphaelites"). Ruskin was first inspired to write about art after reading criticisms of Turner's landscapes. When Ruskin's first volume of *Modern Painters* was published anonymously in 1843, he addressed the role of art as being truthful, both literally and morally, to nature (Ruskin *Modern Painters*). The positive response encouraged his developing interest in art criticism, and he continued to publish works about art for the next seventeen years ("Ruskin, Turner, and the Pre-Raphaelites").

Eight years after defending Turner's work, Ruskin again defended another artist. In 1851, with the added weight of being an established art critic, Ruskin published letters in *The Times* that defended Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents*. Although Millais and Ruskin had known each other prior to this, the two became better friends, with Ruskin acting as a patron to Millais. The two men travelled to Scotland in 1853, along with Ruskin's wife Effie, née Euphemia Gray (1828-1897). The Ruskin marriage had been troubled for some time before the three travelled to Scotland together. Amid great scandal, Effie filed for annulment in 1854, citing her husband's impotence as the reason their six-year marriage had never been consummated. Ruskin denied being

impotent, and the reason(s) for the lack of consummation remains a matter of speculation. Shortly after Effie's divorce from Ruskin, John Millais and Effie Gray were married in 1855, and seemingly enjoyed a happy marriage, despite the fact that Effie was no longer accepted socially. They had eight children, and remained together until his death in 1896. Ruskin ended his patronage for Millais, but maintained his support for other Pre-Raphaelites, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, and, later, Edward Burne-Jones. Ruskin had even provided funding for Elizabeth Siddall, the Pre-Raphaelite muse, model, and artist, in order for her to pursue her own artistic endeavors. Ruskin and Millais were openly critical of each other for the rest of their lives ("Ruskin, Turner, and the Pre-Raphaelites").

Shortly after the exhibition of *Christ in the House of His Parents*, Millais painted another work that would also become famous, and with considerably less negative response. Millais's *Ophelia* (1851-1852) was a hallmark of many of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics, as articulated by William Rossetti. It showed a clear attention to nature, it sympathized with something serious and heartfelt in previous art, it paid tribute to one of the "Immortals" identified by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and it elevated the ordinary – in this case, an ordinary (working class) woman, Elizabeth Siddall. She would become one of the Pre-Raphaelites' favorite models, an artist in her own right, and the wife of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.



Figure 5. *Ophelia* (1851-1852) by John Everett Millais.

Millais's inspiration for this work comes from a short speech by Queen Gertrude in *Hamlet*. Gertrude enters the scene to describe the death of Ophelia. As the death occurred offstage, the audience must rely upon Gertrude's description of Ophelia's final few moments:

There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
 That shows his hoard leaves in the glassy stream;
 There with fantastic garlands did she come
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead men's finders call them:

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
 When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
 And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
 Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
 As one incapable of her own distress,
 Or like a creature native and indued
 Unto that element: but long it could not be
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death. (IV.vii.141-158)

Millais paints Ophelia floating in the brook with her flowers, oblivious to her peril. His attention to detail, and his focus on painting Nature as it exists, show the same commitment to the Pre-Raphaelite ideals as his previous works. Millais had painted the setting along the banks of the Hogsmill River in Surrey; the location now has a bench and informational marker for visitors to the site (“Site of John Everett Millais’ *Ophelia*”). In order to paint Ophelia, Millais had the nineteen-year-old model, Elizabeth Siddall, spend hours floating, fully clothed, in a tub in his flat in London. This was done during the winter, and although Millais tried to keep the water warm through the use of oil lamps, the lamps frequently went out. Siddall caught pneumonia from this experience. Her father demanded that Millais assume the medical bills for Elizabeth’s illness – fifty pounds sterling.

The intersection of visual art and the written word is a theme of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and that theme remained a predominant source of inspiration throughout the Pre-Raphaelite movement. The four illustrations discussed in Chapter Two are all inspired by famous writings: the Christian Bible, the poetry of John Keats, and derivatively, *The Decameron*. In 1854, a new milestone was achieved; three Pre-Raphaelites were commissioned to illustrate a new edition of Tennyson's poetry. This commission showed the increased status of the work of the Pre-Raphaelites; rather than being inspired to create artwork based upon poetry, and then sell their works, their artwork was actively sought for no less a poet than the Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom. Moreover, this artwork was commissioned a mere four years after Dickens's scathing criticism of *Christ in the House of His Parents*. "In 1854. . .Tennyson's publisher called on Rossetti. The idea was to produce engravings for the then-dated 1842 edition of *Poems*" (Jeffers 232). Millais and Hunt were also employed on this project. Dante Gabriel Rossetti replied to the commission that Elizabeth Siddall, who was at that time both his preferred model and his domestic partner, should have been employed on the project as well. Siddall, an artist and poet in her own right, had previously completed a pen and ink rendition of the Lady of Shallott turning away from her weaving to gaze out the window (Jeffers 233).

The illustrations created by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Millais, Hunt, and twenty-four other artists for the 1857 edition of Tennyson's *Poems* (also called the Moxon *Tennyson*, named after the publisher) were not without their own controversies. The artists found their roles as commissioned illustrators to be more restrictive than their roles as freelance artists. The artists were required to balance their own creative interpretations

with the living author's intent regarding his own poetry, and their contemporary responses indicate that this was not wholly achieved. Although the Pre-Raphaelites had identified Tennyson as one of their Immortals, and shared with him an interest in medieval topics and themes, the admiration was not wholly mutual. Tennyson did not approve of some of the illustrations; he felt that the artists had taken too much artistic license ("The Moxon illustrated edition of Tennyson's *Poems*"). Tennyson specifically objected to Hunt's illustration for "The Lady of Shalott," as he had not said anything in the poem about the Lady becoming entangled in her weaving (Cooke).

In Tennyson's poem, the Lady of Shalott lives in a secluded tower on an island near Camelot; a curse prevents her from leaving or even looking directly outside. She weaves constantly, inspired by the reflections of the world outside that she sees in her mirror. It is the sound of Lancelot singing that causes her to look outside; the curse is brought upon her, her mirror cracks, and she leaves the tower. She finds a boat, paints her name on the prow, and floats to Camelot, singing as she is carried downstream, but dies before arriving there. The knights fearfully cross themselves when they see her; Lancelot comments on her beauty, and asks God to be merciful to the Lady of Shalott.

The woodcut illustration that accompanied the opening lines of "The Lady of Shallott" in the 1857 Moxon edition, engraved by John Thompson, was based upon a sketch by Hunt. In 1888-1905, Hunt would create an oil painting based upon that same sketch.



Figure 6. *The Lady of Shalott* (1857), woodcarved illustration by John Thompson, based upon a sketch by William Holman Hunt.



Figure 7. *The Lady of Shalott* (1880-1905) by William Holman Hunt.

One notable feature in both versions is the hair of the Lady of Shalott. The Lady has just looked out the window to see Lancelot; according to Tennyson, “She look’d down to Camelot/Out flew the web and floated wide” (lines 113-114). It appears that the same force that blew her weaving from the loom also blew her hair back wildly. The loose waves of her hair (easier to see in the woodcarving) are a hallmark of the “Stunner” – the label used by the Pre-Raphaelite artists to describe the women they used as models. These ideal women had long, thick, wavy hair, heavy-lidded eyes, thick necks, and full lips. The Pre-Raphaelite artists prided themselves on finding these stunners (frequently working-class women) in everyday settings, from millinery shops, the theater, and even strolling along the streets. The artists would then use these working-class women as models for their paintings, and “elevate the ordinary” by transforming them into the subjects of their paintings. By doing so, these artists continued their dialogues with the past; they employed contemporary models while addressing subjects from historic and literary legends.

Tennyson’s poem inspired many paintings of *The Lady of Shalott* by various Pre-Raphaelite artists (Hunt, Walter Crane, John William Waterhouse, et al). Tennyson was one of the “immortals” that the Pre-Raphaelites favored, and *The Lady of Shallott*, set in Arthurian times, made this work an ideal subject for their art. In emphasizing the connections between poetry and visual arts, Waterhouse painted three different scenes from “The Lady of Shalott” over several years; all three were oil compositions on canvas. Each of Waterhouse’s paintings focused on a different line of the poem. In 1888, he painted the Lady, sitting upright in her boat, singing. Six years later, he painted *The Lady of Shalott Looking at Lancelot* (1894). This rendition shows the Lady in her tower, in

front of a cracked mirror and caught in her weaving, in the same manner as Hunt's works. His third rendition, *I Am Half-Sick of Shadows, said the Lady of Shalott* (1916), shows the Lady sitting in front of her loom, looking up from her work, with her hands behind her head. The enduring interest in "The Lady of Shalott" bears out Zanzucchi's assessment; "In a more general sense, it is fair to say that the pre-Raphaelite fascination with Arthuriana is traceable to Tennyson's work" ("Alfred Lord Tennyson").

The Moxon *Tennyson* was neither a critical nor a financial success, due both to the varied artistic styles of the twenty-seven illustrators and due to the cost of the book. However,

These intricate and daring designs were to have a dramatic impact on illustration. Between 1855 and 1870 the art of imaginative book and magazine illustration reached remarkable levels of quality and intensity. The Pre-Raphaelites were largely responsible for this transformation in English wood-engraving. They heralded a "golden age" in which illustration was recognized as a stand-alone art form, no longer secondary to the text. ("The Moxon Illustrated Edition of Tennyson's *Poems*")

Dante Gabriel Rossetti would continue to create book illustrations, including collaborations with his sister Christina for two of her publications (*Goblin Market*, 1862, and *The Prince's Progress*, 1866). The Kelmscott *Chaucer* (1896), the final project of William Morris, may be the best-known example of the golden age of illustration.

The Moxon *Tennyson* was published in 1857. In February 1857, Dante Gabriel Rossetti met William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. While still enrolled at Oxford, the students, who were fans of the Pre-Raphaelites, wrote to Dante Gabriel Rossetti to

request contributions for a literary journal they had started. According to Georgiana Burne-Jones, Edward Burne-Jones wrote,

Shall I tell you about our Magazine, as you are so good as to take an interest in it? In the enclosed envelope I have sent you a prospectus. . . We have thoroughly set ourselves to the work now, banded ourselves into an exclusive Brotherhood of seven. Mr. Morris is proprietor. . . We shall restrict ourselves to our present contributors, and not receive any indiscriminate contributions, for we wish to keep before us one aim and end throughout the Magazine. . . We may do a world of good, for we start from new principles and those of the strongest kind, and are as full of enthusiasm as the first crusaders. . . I can safely affirm for all that no mean and contemptible desire for a little contemporary fame, no mere purpose of writing for writing's sake has prompted one amongst us, but a sole and only wish to teach other principles and truths which they may not know and which have made us happy. (Burne-Jones 121)

These words, defining the meaning and purpose of their endeavor, echo the writings of William Rossetti. In addition, they also forecast the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement which would be led by Morris and Burne-Jones. One such principle, according to Morris, would be, "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful" (lecture at Birmingham Society of Arts and School of Design, 1880). In time, Morris and Burne-Jones, and "The Firm" of Morris & Company, would apply the Pre-Raphaelite ideal of "elevate the ordinary" to the decorative arts.

However, their first collaborative project was not a literary endeavor. In the summer of 1857, Burne-Jones, Morris, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti were among a group of seven artists who were commissioned to paint frescoes in the upper levels of the newly-constructed Oxford Union Library. Work began that fall on the ambitious, yet doomed, project. Art collector and author Dennis Lanigan wrote about this project for *The Victorian Web*.

The Oxford Union Building Committee offered simple conditions: Dante Gabriel Rossetti was to be the leader of the project, and was responsible for finding other artists to collaborate. The artists would not be paid, but the Building Committee would pay for scaffolding, materials, travel, and housing for the artists (Lanigan). Several of the artists Dante Gabriel Rossetti invited to join the project declined. Finally, a team of seven began working on the frescoes on the newly-completed building. There were ten bay areas, above the bookshelves; each artist had his own bay area to complete (the frescoes in the other three bays were later completed by a different artist, after negotiations with Dante Gabriel Rossetti to complete the project stretched out fruitlessly for two years). The subject of their frescoes was one of the favorite themes of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: Arthurian legend, specifically, drawn from Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Each artist's panel would focus on a different part of the legend (Lanigan).

Work began in August 1857, the same year the Moxon *Tennyson* had been published. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and Morris all lodged together. The artists worked diligently during the daylight hours. Laughter and singing was heard as they worked; when needed, they modeled for each other. The artists socialized in the evenings at dinner, lectures, and poetry readings. The creation of the frescoes was a

convivial experience for the artists; Dante Gabriel Rossetti referred to the project as “The Jovial Campaign” (Lanigan).

However, the project was doomed. None of the artists on the project had any previous experience with frescoes. The walls had only recently been constructed, and the mortar holding the bricks in place had not had sufficient time to dry completely. The artists applied a thin layer of plaster without preparing the walls, and began to paint immediately. Lanigan states that “the murals must initially have presented a glorious appearance as can be ascertained from Coventry Patmore’s praise in *The Saturday Review* of 1857” (Lanigan). The frescoes began to fade and flake almost immediately, due to the conditions of their creation. In addition, the lighting in the Oxford Union Library was provided by open gas flames; the smoke rose and darkened the paint. Smoke from tobacco, which was sanctioned among the student population, also darkened the paint. There have been several unsuccessful attempts at restoration, and the frescoes are currently only barely visible. Despite the fact that the project was doomed, it brought about two significant occurrences: a renewed interest in large-scale murals in England, and the chance meeting of Jane Burden in an Oxford theater (Cooper 81). Jane Burden, later Morris, would become one of the best-known and influential women associated with the Pre-Raphaelites: an artist in her own right, but better known as a wife to William Morris, and model for and lover of both Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Although there is no evidence that the Pre-Raphaelite ambition of “elevating the ordinary” was ever meant to describe anything other than their artistic creations, the argument can be made that the artists applied that ideology to the women who, originally employed as models, became their partners. By developing relationships with women

considered to be below their social class, making them the subjects of their art, and providing them with the means (tutoring, education, and financial support) to improve their social standings, these artists' relationships with certain muses certainly reflected their ideal of "elevating the ordinary." Whether this shared behavior was a deliberate manifestation of their ideal, a subconscious pattern, or a willful defiance of social and familial expectations, the reasons will remain unknown. Some of these women (e.g., Elizabeth Siddall, Jane Burden) not only evolved from artists' models to partners and wives, but also became artists in their own rights.

Several of the Pre-Raphaelite male artists "found" a model from the working class, developed a relationship, and then attempted to re-form and educate the woman into a socially acceptable partner. These women, as the artists soon discovered, were not merely blank canvases on which they could paint. Annie Miller, the daughter of a soldier and domestic servant, was working as a barmaid when she was "found" by William Holman Hunt (MacCarthy 137). She was the model for his painting *The Awakening Conscience* (1853). According to MacCarthy, He proposed marriage to her in 1854, and then left for an extended visit to Palestine. Hunt arranged for Miller to be formally educated while he was away, so that they could marry – and she would be socially acceptable as his wife – when he returned. He also left a list of artists for whom she could model with his consent. However, when he returned in 1856, he found that she had modelled for artists not on his list – including Dante Gabriel Rossetti (MacCarthy 138-139). Miller may also have become romantically involved with other men during Hunt's travels. Hunt broke off the engagement and painted over her face in *The Awakening Conscience* (Cooper 95). Dante Gabriel Rossetti continued to use Miller as a model

(Helsing 298); this was a source of contention between him and Elizabeth Siddall, his domestic partner and soon-to-be wife. Although Dante Gabriel Rossetti was not the only Pre-Raphaelite artist who became romantically involved with models and then attempted to re-form his models into conventionally accepted women of his social class, he is the only one who was documented to have done so – both directly and indirectly – with three different women: Elizabeth Siddall, Fanny Cornforth, and Jane Burden.

Elizabeth Siddall was a member of the working-class, employed in a millinery shop, when she was first spotted by the artist Walter Deverell in 1849 (Cooper 95). He introduced her to his friends; Millais used Siddall as his model for *Ophelia* (1851-1852). Shortly after that, Dante Gabriel Rossetti became possessive of her; he refused to work with other models, and insisted that Siddall model only for him (Hashmonay). He objected to the idea of Siddall modeling for others, but he objected neither to the artistic support she received from Ford Madox Brown, nor the patronage of John Ruskin, who “was extremely fond of Siddall” and provided her with an annual stipend of 150 pounds sterling (Battersby). Although Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Siddall were lovers, cohabitating from 1852, and artistic collaborators, he postponed introducing her to his family (Hashmonay). As he feared the criticism of his siblings and the disapproval of his parents, they did not marry until 1860; they had a quiet wedding after living together for eight years. Siddall died less than two years later, following a miscarriage and an overdose of laudanum. She was buried in the Rossetti family plot in Highgate Cemetery (Hashmonay).

Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s relationship with Fanny Cornforth, another of his “stunner” models, began around 1856, while he was cohabitating with Siddall, and lasted

for more than twenty years. Cornforth was also a working-class woman; employed as a house servant, she was the daughter of a blacksmith. She moved in to Dante Gabriel Rossetti's house following the death of Siddall (1862), ostensibly as his housekeeper, and they lived together for the next fifteen years. According to William Michael Rossetti, the Rossetti family refused to accept her due to her working-class status ("Fanny Cornforth"). When Dante Gabriel Rossetti's health declined, Cornforth was forced to move out so members of his family of origin could move in to care for him. They remained in close contact until his death. He attempted to provide for her by setting her up in her own house nearby; he also gave her money, and several paintings with clear provenances, so she could verify ownership and sell them if she needed the money (private correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to Fanny Cornforth, 25 January 1878, holdings of Delaware Art Museum). Despite their 24-year relationship – during which he had married Elizabeth Siddall and been involved with Jane Burden Morris – Cornforth was prevented from even attending his funeral. Dante Gabriel Rossetti died on 9 April 1882. On the day of the funeral (14 April 1882), William Michael Rossetti sent her a brief note that said, "Dear Madam, Your letter of the 12th only reached me this morning around 9. The coffin had been closed last evening, & the funeral takes place early this afternoon – so there is nothing further to be done. Faithfully yours, W. M. Rossetti" (private correspondence of William Michael Rossetti to Fanny Cornforth, 14 April 1882, holdings of Delaware Art Museum).

In 1857, while working with Morris on the Arthurian frescoes in the Oxford Union Library, Rossetti spotted eighteen-year-old Jane Burden at the theater. Like many of the other "stunners," she was from a working-class family; her father was a stablehand,

and her mother was an illiterate domestic servant. Rossetti asked Burden to model for him, and introduced her to his newfound friend and collaborator, William Morris. Burden and Morris were soon engaged, and during the course of their engagement, Morris paid tutors to educate her.

Jane was privately educated in the months before her wedding, when she transformed herself from a servant girl into an elegant young woman. . .she learnt how to speak “properly,” to hold herself correctly and to converse in a “polite” manner. She also had piano lessons and took instantly to music, eventually becoming an accomplished player. It is likely that she also received instruction in French, reaching a level of fluency later evidenced by the books she read. She will have spent a good deal of time sewing, stitching dresses, nightgowns and underclothes for herself and bed linens for her future home, with materials bought by Morris. (Sharp & Marsh 5)

The instruction that Jane Burden received during her engagement proved to have a much greater impact than simply preparing her for upper-class English society. She became a skilled pianist, fluent in French and Italian, and a voracious reader. She also became an artist in her own right: a master embroiderer and weaver. Jane Morris taught needlework to their daughters; the younger, May, would become the Director of Embroidery of Morris & Company. Through her expertise in textiles, Jane Morris contributed to the success of Morris & Company, and is at least partially responsible for “The Company’s” renown as a preeminent provider of decorative arts of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Sharp and Marsh write that Burden's life story may have inspired, or partially inspired, George Bernard Shaw to write *Pygmalion* (1913). In the 1880-1890s, Shaw had been involved with Jane and William Morris's daughter May (and remained friends with her after their romantic relationship ended), and was familiar with Jane Morris's life story (15). However, Sharp and Marsh also credit Jane Morris with being active in her education and responsible for her own evolution. She was no shrinking violet, malleable to the whims of her spouse. Sharp and Marsh claim that Jane Morris's greatest achievement was her own metamorphosis (22).

Ten years after the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed, the movement had achieved both fame and notoriety. The artists had been both vilified in the press and commissioned to create art. Other artists sought to emulate their style and adopt their aesthetics. They inspired renewed artistic interest in "the Immortals," particularly medieval lore, and in art forms such as murals and book illustrations.

The Pre-Raphaelite artists' resistance to confronting social bias – despite meaningful, multi-faceted relationships with the women who were their models, muses, partners, collaborators, and spouses – indicates that "elevating the ordinary" was a much easier concept to embrace for works of art than it was for socio-economic class warfare. The Pre-Raphaelites relished the idea of "discovering" working class women (e.g., Siddall and Jane Burden) to employ as models, but insisted on educating/refining them before marriage or introducing them to their families.

The friendship formed between Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris, and would impact both the personal and professional lives of these artists. The two would partner to form a new business, Morris & Company, that would extend the ideal of

“elevate the ordinary” to decorative arts through a devotion to medieval craftsmanship. They would also cohabitate for years in a house designed to embody the Arts & Crafts ideals for which Morris would become famous. Their friendship and partnership would last only a few years. Based upon his work with other Pre-Raphaelites, Morris’s aesthetic would evolve into the founding principles of the Arts and Crafts movement in the United Kingdom. His friendship with Rossetti provided Morris with the impetus to develop his own artistic ideals and, from there, embrace socialism – to an extent.

CHAPTER FOUR: WILLIAM MORRIS: A RENAISSANCE MAN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

During his lifetime, William Morris (1834-1896) was best known as a poet (Wilmer ix). However, Morris's fields of expertise included fiction, architecture, decorative arts, stained glass, textiles, wallpapers, book arts, publishing, and political activism. Morris despised the Victorian factories that mass-produced goods, both for the practices that exploited the workers and for the proliferation of poorly-constructed goods. In order to counter the consumerism of the Industrial Revolution, Morris espoused a return to craftsmanship. Morris taught himself to paint, weave, carve, design, embroider, and stain glass; he researched historical methods for every medium he wanted to learn to create: embroidery and weaving for textiles, wood-carving for furniture, and stained glass for windows. Through his own research and dedication to artisanal methods, Morris is responsible for adapting the ethos of the Pre-Raphaelites to the decorative arts, and facilitating the development of the Arts and Crafts era in the United Kingdom. He strove to elevate the ordinary in the domestic realm, not simply for the aesthetics, but also to support a more equitable society and work towards his socialist utopia. In the works he created, Morris strengthened his ties both to the past and his present. Not only did he create works about historical and literary events and figures, but he rendered those works in methods appropriate to the periods they represented; tapestries of Arthurian figures were woven according to medieval practices. Not only did Morris pursue these practices to achieve authenticity, but he also did so to resist the accelerating trends of industrialism, cheap products, and oppressive factory labor. Due to his artistic research and socialist philosophies, Morris led the artistic evolution from Pre-Raphaelitism to Arts and Crafts.

Over the course of his life, Morris would famously master many media from visual arts to decorative arts, including book arts. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* now newly imprinted (also known as the Kelmscott Chaucer), a collaboration with Burne-Jones, was a masterpiece of design and craft. Morris, who had been apprenticed to an architect immediately following his graduation from Oxford, designed a house in Kent for his family to share with the Burne-Jones family: Red House. This house was one of the earliest examples of the Arts & Crafts style for which Morris would become best-known. Not only did Morris design the house, but he and his friends designed the furniture and décor, crafting most by hand, including the stained-glass windows. Although he made a few contributions to art through two-dimensional paintings, he is today best known for his work in the decorative arts.

On February 19, 1880, Morris presented a lecture to the Birmingham Society of Arts and School of Design, entitled “The Beauty of Life.” During that lecture, Morris advised, “Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful” (“Anarchy & Beauty: William Morris and His Legacy, 1860-1960”). This single statement distills Morris’s ideology. Morris had assumed the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic of elevating the ordinary, and expanded it beyond his contemporaries’ perceptions of fine art. Morris worked to elevate the ordinary: to make houses, churches, rugs, books, windows, furniture all things of beauty. For Morris, elevating the ordinary was not something to be confined to an art gallery, but something to be enshrined in every individual’s private home.

William Morris was born in 1834 in Walthamstow, Essex, to a family of means. His father was a financier with a firm in London, and his mother had been born in a

wealthy family. William was the third of nine children who survived infancy, the eldest child having died within days of birth. As a child, he was fond of reading. He enjoyed riding his pony, investigating the medieval architecture and ancient ruins in the countryside. At the age of nine, he began formal studies at a nearby school and was permitted to attend as a day student. Once he was required to begin boarding, he grew homesick and discontented with the experience. In February 1848, he began attending the Marlborough College, which was at that point a five-year-old public school. He was bored and bullied at the new school. He did not return after the Christmas 1851 holidays, and was tutored at home until entering Exeter College, Oxford, in 1852. Once again, he found himself dissatisfied with formal education and bored by the educational methodology (MacCarthy 53).

Despite – or, perhaps, due to – his discontent with formal education, Morris’s time at Oxford was of singular importance. The buildings on and around campus fed his interest in medievalism and architecture. He met fellow first-year student, Edward Burne-Jones, who would become his lifelong friend, close collaborator, and business partner. Morris joined Burne-Jones’s circle of friends from his childhood in Birmingham; although this group referred to themselves as “The Brotherhood,” historians have labeled this group “The Birmingham Set” (MacCarthy 59). Members of the group shared an interest in literary studies, particularly Tennyson and Shakespeare. During their time in college, two works read were of particular importance to Morris and Burne-Jones: Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur* and the writings of art critic John Ruskin.

The friendship shared by Morris and Burne-Jones had begun based on their mutual interest in poetry, art, Arthurian legend, and medievalism. Although Tennyson

had been a favorite author of the Birmingham set, and the first four idylls of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* were published in 1859 (subsequent idylls were published in 1869, 1871, 1872, with the twelfth and final idyll published in 1885), it was Malory's work that was their touchstone regarding medievalism and its chivalric code. The two students decided that they wanted to become members of the clergy and live monastic lives, in order to dedicate their lives, through celibacy, to the spirituality of art.

John Ruskin, the art critic, had achieved fame before Morris and Burne-Jones started at Oxford in 1852. Ruskin's first published work, *Modern Painters* (1843), defended the works of J.M.W. Turner, and argued that an artist's moral obligation was to be truthful to, not interpretive of, natural beauty. Ruskin's defense of *Christ in the House of His Parents* by John Everett Millais (1851) had legitimized the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* (1851-1853) was drawn from notes he made during a visit in 1849. The second volume (1853) contained a chapter, "On the Nature of Gothic," that was instrumental in shaping Morris's approach to art, architecture, and the decorative arts. In this chapter, Ruskin encouraged preservation, rather than restoration, of architecture (*On the Nature of Gothic* 34). He also advocated for a return to hand-crafted decorative arts, rather than cheap factory goods that were poorly mass-produced. Morris would later reprint *The Nature of Gothic*, and the introduction to the illuminated Kelmscott Press edition was written by Morris himself (1892).

In 1855, Morris and Burne-Jones traveled throughout France to visit medieval churches. On this trip, having grown disenchanted with Anglo-Catholic ideology, they decided to abandon their earlier commitment to theology and celibacy and to dedicate their lives to art (MacCarthy 86-95). Upon their return to Oxford, they and the rest of the

Birmingham Set started their own publication, *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*. Its goals were similar to those of *The Germ*; it contained poetry, short stories, and art critiques. In addition to his writing, Morris also contributed his personal finances to support the magazine. Like its predecessor, *The Germ*, *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* was short-lived; it was published only twelve times. It received praise from two cultural titans, John Ruskin and Alfred Tennyson. Most importantly, the magazine was the vehicle through which Burne-Jones and Morris met Dante Gabriel Rossetti (MacCarthy 99).

According to Fiona MacCarthy, a cultural historian who wrote extensively about Morris, he graduated from Oxford in 1856, and began an architectural apprenticeship with the Oxford firm of George Edmund Street, an architect known for his work in the Victorian Gothic Revival style. After he was transferred to the London office, Morris moved in to Bloomsbury lodgings with Burne-Jones (who did not complete his degree). During his time living in Bloomsbury, Morris grew dissatisfied with city life, particularly with pollution and urban sprawl. Disappointed with the furnishings that were commonly available for purchase, Morris designed and commissioned furniture in a medieval style, upon which he painted images from Arthurian legend (MacCarthy 118-120). Two such examples from his time in Bloomsbury are part of the Pre-Raphaelite collection at the Delaware Art Museum; both had been acquired in 1997.

The Arming of a Knight was a collaboration of William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1857-1858. This chair's wooden back and legs are painted; the seat is covered in leather, which is held in place by nails.



Figure 8. *The Arming of a Knight*. William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1857-1858.

Glorious Guendolen's Golden Hair was a collaboration of William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, c. 1856-1857. This chair's wooden back is painted, but barely visible due to fading. Remnants of the leather that had covered the wooden seat are still visible, as are the nails which held the leather cover to the seat.



Figure 9. *Glorious Guendolen's Golden Hair*. William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1856-1857.

Morris's architectural apprenticeship lasted less than two years. Although he did not become a professional architect, this period of his life yielded a lifelong friend and collaborator: Philip Webb. Webb had been assigned to supervise Morris's apprenticeship. Webb and Morris became friends; that friendship outlasted Morris's career as an architect, which he abandoned in 1857 in order to return to Oxford and join "The Jovial Campaign:" the painting of the Oxford Union Library (MacCarthy 122).

In 1857, the same year the Moxon *Tennyson* was published, Morris and Burne-Jones wrote to Dante Gabriel Rossetti to ask for contributions to *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (Burne-Jones 121). The friendships formed between these three men not only became critical factors in their personal lives, but also in the evolution of the Arts and Crafts movement as well. The three artists' first collaboration, the Arthurian murals at the Oxford Union Library, was initially considered a success. For more than fifteen years, the three artists would collaborate on their art, writing, and design, and form a decorative arts firm together. They would also cohabitate, and share responsibility for designing and decorating their shared homes, The Red House and Kelmscott Manor. The business and the two residences would serve as incubators for the burgeoning Arts and Crafts work for which Morris and Burne-Jones would become famous. The ties that strengthened the relationships and collaborations between Burne-Jones, Morris, and Rossetti extended from the artistic and aesthetic in to the personal; their relationships with their partners overlapped as well. At first, the friendly relationships supported the communal living and creativity at Red House. However, Rossetti's relationship with Jane Burden Morris would irrevocably fracture the friendship Morris and Rossetti had shared for years (Cooper 274 and MacCarthy 347).

Morris was introduced to Jane Burden in October 1857, while he was working on the interior of the Oxford Union Library. Dante Gabriel Rossetti had seen Jane Burden in the audience at a theater in Oxford, and invited her to model for the artists. Both Rossetti and Morris were attracted to Burden; at the time, Rossetti and Siddall had been living together for five years. Morris and Burden began a relationship and became engaged in spring 1858. During the course of their engagement, Morris hired tutors to provide Burden with instruction in French, piano, elocution, and embroidery. Morris and Burden were married in Oxford in April 26, 1859, and spent their honeymoon in Bruges. They lived in London while their first house was being built (MacCarthy 136-137 and Cooper 83-94).

Red House

Fiona MacCarthy writes extensively about Red House in her book *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*. Red House, in Bexleyheath, southwest London, was the result of collaboration between William Morris and Philip Webb, the architect who had supervised him (MacCarthy 151). Morris and Webb had remained friends after Morris left his brief apprenticeship; that friendship remained steadfast throughout Morris's life. Upon deciding that he wanted a new home built to his specifications, Morris asked his friend to collaborate (MacCarthy 154). Red House was Webb's first independent commission, as he had left Street's firm and established his own architectural firm in 1858 ("The Artistic History of Red House").

Morris's goal was to create a building that was a home, an art studio, and a salon for his community of friends and collaborators ("The Artistic History of Red House").

He purchased a plot of land about ten miles from the center of London that included both a meadow and an orchard. The house itself was about three miles from the nearest railway station, and it was located near the route traveled by medieval pilgrims en route to Canterbury Cathedral. The ruins of the medieval church, Lesnes Abbey, was another site of interest nearby. The Abbey, built in 1179, was closed by Cardinal Thomas Wolsey in 1525, and destroyed shortly after. Given Morris's fascination with medieval architecture, it seems unlikely that the proximity to the ruins had not factored into his considerations when choosing the location. As a child, Morris had ridden his pony through the lands near his childhood home to visit ancient ruins. As an adult, he thoughtfully planned every aspect of his custom-designed home, including many details that paid homage to Medieval design. "In part, Morris wanted to realise the idea of a craft-based artistic community that he and Burne-Jones had been talking about since they were students. The result was Red House, a property that would be 'medieval in spirit' and, eventually, able to accommodate more than one family" ("Philip Webb: A New Vision for Domestic Space"). This interest in medievalism had begun in Morris's childhood, when he rode his pony to visit the ruins of medieval monasteries. It was encouraged through his interests in common with the Pre-Raphaelites. It would also inspire Morris to research medieval methods for staining glass and weaving tapestries. In this way, Morris would take inspiration from the Pre-Raphaelites and develop it in to his own Arts and Crafts creations ("The Artistic History of Red House").

The design was a collaboration of both Webb and Morris; "Morris and Webb designed Red House without unnecessary decoration, instead choosing to champion utility of design; this would become a principle of the Arts and Crafts movement" ("The

Artistic History of Red House”). The name “Red House” was a tribute to the red brick building and the red tiles that covered the steeply-pitched roof. The house itself was designed in an L-shape, not in the massive cube style that was *de rigueur*. The placement of windows made the exterior view of the house seem asymmetrical (“The Artistic History of Red House”). Rather than placing windows to create a balanced exterior, windows were placed according to the design and need of the room. For instance, Morris’s bedroom had only a small window; as he did not plan to spend much waking time in his room, there was little need for daylight (“The Artistic History of Red House”). Conversely, the studio had eight windows in four directions so the studio would be filled with natural light during the day. A courtyard was created in the exterior space formed between the two wings of the house; a well was dug, and housed in a small red brick and tile-roofed structure to match the house. Within five years, Morris and Webb would develop plans to create a second, identical, house for the Burne-Jones family; that house would be located adjacent to the original house, and placed to enclose the courtyard between the two dwellings. “Webb’s plans envisaged creating a complete quadrangle around the high-roofed, red-brick well, with separate entrances for each family. His initial plans had to be scaled back, due to the high costs involved, but plans were made for building to commence in 1865” (“The Artistic History of Red House”).

As the house neared completion in 1860, Morris moved to rented lodgings nearby in order to supervise the final stages of construction (MacCarthy 156). William and Jane Burden Morris moved into the finished house in June 1860. The Morrises began decorating in keeping with William’s aesthetic, which had their foundations in Ruskin’s philosophies, particularly those addressed in “On the Nature of Gothic.” Morris chose to

elevate the ordinary by commissioning medieval-styled artisanal furnishings, and eschewed the more common, less expensive, mass-produced furniture of the era. Dante Gabriel and Elizabeth Siddall Rossetti (who had married on May 23, 1860) were joined by Edward and Georgiana Burne-Jones (who had married on June 6, 1860) in the collaborative efforts to furnish and decorate Red House. They painted murals on the interior walls and decorated the wooden furniture with painted patterns, designs, and images. “Huge murals and hand-embroidered fabrics decorated the walls, creating the feel of a historical manor house” (“Philip Webb: A New Vision for Domestic Space”).



Figure 10. Front Hall of Red House. Philip Webb and William Morris, 1859-1860.

According to a [YouTube video](#) posted in 2021 by the National Trust and narrated by Nicole Perry, the Collections and House Officer, “The painting on the front of the settle is called ‘The Joyous Gard,’ and it is a self-portrait of William Morris and his

friends. . . This painting was started by William Morris and then carried on by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, but unfortunately it was never finished. We also believe the painting to be a partial representation of the Red House garden” (“Tour Behind the Scenes at Red House”). Perry further explains that the gardens were designed to be extensions of the house; the gardens were divided into “rooms,” demarcated by trellises and borders of native English lavender and rosemary.



Figure 11. Painted Settle, front hall. Perry identified William and Jane Morris as the figures on the left panel. Edward and Georgiana Burne-Jones are seen seated on the right panel, with Elizabeth Siddall Rossetti standing above them.



Figure 12. Painted Settle, front hall. Perry identified William and Jane Morris as the figures on the left panel. Edward and Georgiana Burne-Jones are seen seated on the right panel, with Elizabeth Siddall Rossetti standing above them.

While narrating the tour of Red House, Perry states, “The mural behind me was painted by Edward Burne-Jones as a wedding present to William and Jane Morris, and the faces of the husband and wife in the wedding ceremony are based on William and Jane. Above it, you can see the first repeating patterns of pink flowers by William Morris, and those pink flowers appear again in his first ever wallpaper design, named Trellis, which was designed here at Red House” (“Tour Behind the Scenes at Red House”).



Figure 13. Red House sitting room settle by Webb, with mural by Burne-Jones behind.

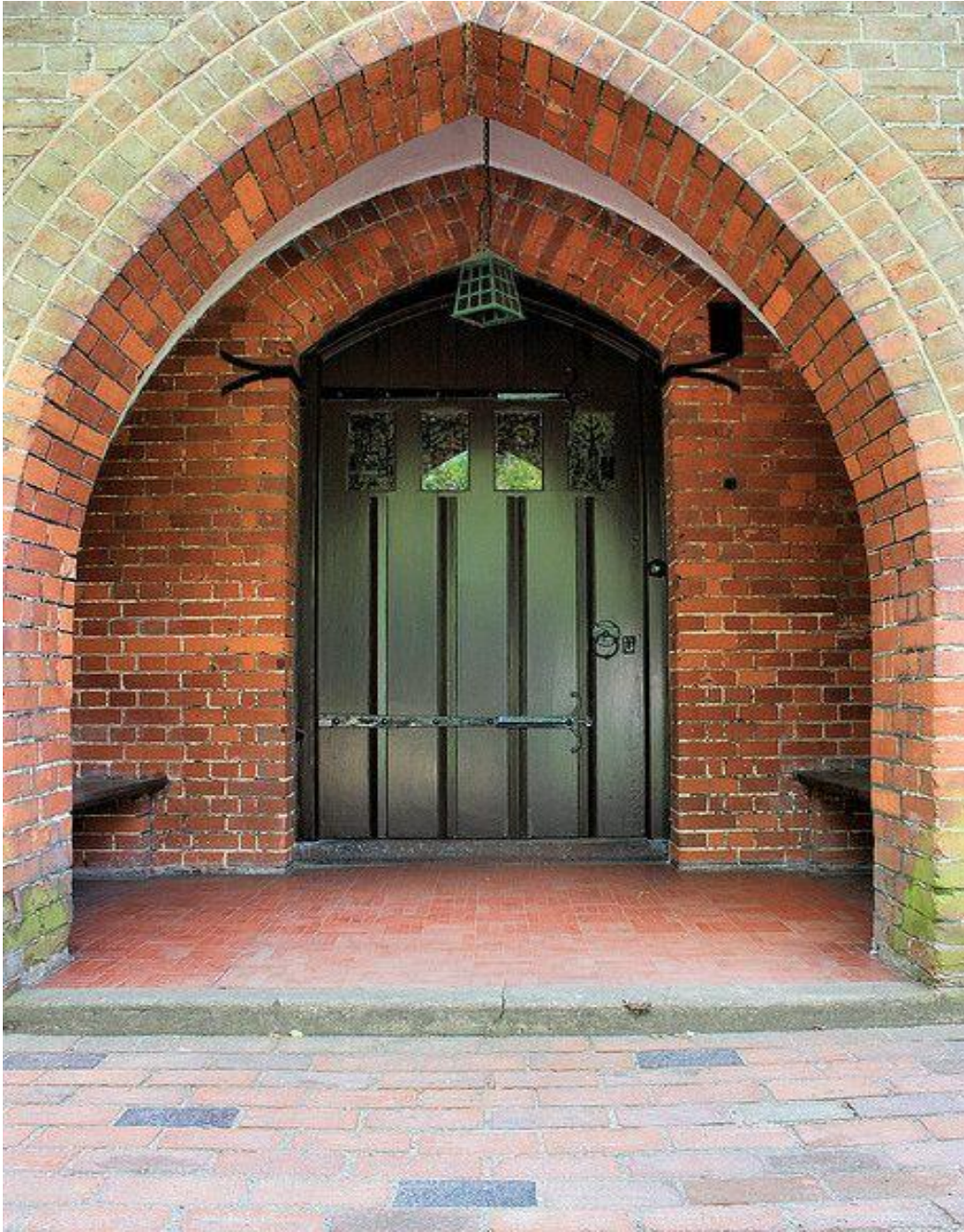


Figure 14. Front door of Red House, exterior view.



Figure 15. Front door of Red House, interior view. The stained glass panels were not original to the door.

Both William and Jane Burden Morris created the tapestries that were hung within the house. Jane had originally been taught needlework during her engagement; she became an accomplished needle artist whose later creations were marketed through her husband's businesses. William, having researched medieval needlework, worked in flat satin stitches, frequently in silk. Through the use of small stitches and varied tints in a similar color family, this would give tapestries the illusion of depth and color gradations on the material.



Figure 16. Detail from “Artichoke,” designed by William Morris in 1877, and embroidered by Ada Phoebe Godman. Wool on linen. Holding of the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, London. Acquired in 1978.

The first few years at Red House were idyllic. The three couples (Morris, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones) spent many harmonious days together at Red House. Much like “The Jovial Campaign,” their days included time spent in decorating, as well as time in playing pranks, playing games such as hide and seek, and spending evenings gathered around the piano to sing. One notable practical joke involved Morris’s friends moving the buttons on his clothing, to give him the impression that he was gaining weight (MacCarthy 162). At least one of the relationships that grew during this time was more complicated; friends noted and discussed the developing closeness between Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Jane Burden Morris.

Red House had been designed to be a home for the Morris family as well as a gathering place for their close friends. Long-range plans included developing the house into a multi-family complex and making the property into a medieval-style artisans’ community (“The Artistic History of Red House”). According to MacCarthy, The Burne-Jones family visited frequently, and were guests every Sunday. The Rossetti family stayed for extended visits; Elizabeth Siddall Rossetti, who had already been in frail health at the time of her marriage in 1860, stayed at Red House during her postpartum period following the stillbirth of a daughter in 1861 (MacCarthy 158). The two Morris daughters were born at Red House; Jane Alice “Jenny” Morris was born in January 1861, and Mary “May” Morris in March 1862. Georgiana Burne-Jones, who had attended art school and been tutored by Ford Madox Brown, gave birth to the Burne-Jones’s first son, Philip, in October 1861. In the biography she wrote about her husband, Georgiana Burne-Jones noted how motherhood separated her from the creative camaraderie of the others, gathered in a room nearby while she tended her newborn; “I remember the feeling of

exile with which I now heard through its closed door the well-known voices of friends together with Edward's familiar laugh, while I sat with my little son on my knee and dropped selfish tears on his as 'separator of companions and the terminator of delights'" (Burne-Jones 1904). Red House was more than a family home; it was the center of community life and an artists' enclave while the Morris family lived there.

"The Firm"

By the end of 1861, Red House had become more than a family home and friendly salon; it became the manifestation of a philosophy of decorative arts; this is addressed in an article published by the Victoria & Albert Museum, which includes Webb's architectural sketches. "Prompted by the success of their efforts (and the experience of 'joy in collective labour'), Morris and his friends decided in 1861 to set up their own interiors company" ("Philip Webb: A New Vision for Domestic Space"). The firm of "Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals" was established as a joint venture by William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Philip Webb, Ford Madox Brown, Peter Paul Marshall, and Charles Faulkner. The goal of "The Firm," as the partners called it, was to sell artisanal, hand-crafted home furnishings that were reminiscent of medieval styles – and often created using time- and labor-intensive medieval methods ("Philip Webb: A New Vision for Domestic Space").

Members of The Firm were intent on adopting Ruskin's ideas of reforming British attitudes to production. They hoped to reinstate decoration as one of the fine arts and adopted an ethos of affordability and anti-elitism (MacCarthy 340).

The Firm's offices were set up in London -- a commute of 3-4 hours each day from Red House via carriage. "Morris had always wanted the firm to be based at Red House but the practical restrictions of a small, rural workshop. . . meant that the idea of a medieval-style craft-based community was abandoned" ("Philip Webb: A New Vision for Domestic Space").

Soon after its inception, The Firm "did win a series of commissions to decorate newly built churches, and became well known for work in stained glass" ("Introducing William Morris"). Many of these commissions had been from George Frederick Bodley, who was at the time the foremost ecclesiastical architect in England. Morris, Burne-Jones, et al, researched medieval methods of creating stained glass, just as Morris had researched medieval methods of weaving and embroidering. "Their stained glass windows proved a particular success in the firm's early years as they were in high demand for the surge in the Neo-Gothic construction and refurbishment of churches" (MacCarthy 176).

The International Exhibition of 1862, much like the Great Exhibition of 1851, was a world's fair held in London; both Exhibitions featured modern inventions and advancements, particularly those of the industrial revolution. In stark contrast to the other exhibits that boasted modern developments such as photography, telegraphs, engines, and refrigeration, The Firm's exhibit included their hand-crafted medieval-styled decorative arts. This exposure created public interest in The Firm and its products -- particularly amongst the bourgeois. Thus began Morris's complex relationships with his clientele. They were able to afford his products, and he needed their commissions to maintain his business. However, he could not make and sell products that the working

classes would be able to afford. Only those with money could afford to elevate the ordinary. Furthermore, there could be no guarantee that clients understood or even cared about the philosophical underpinnings of the works they purchased for their homes. Morris would continue to have a complex relationship with the business of making money – particularly when his capitalist enterprises funded his socialist activities.

Due to the International Exhibition of 1861, and the positive press that followed, demand for The Firm's products increased. However, in those early years, The Firm still struggled financially. Their products were labor-intensive and created from costly raw materials. Morris, who was spending more than three hours each day in his commute, entered discussions with Burne-Jones in order to move their workshops to Upton, the village near Red House. Webb was asked to draw up plans to complete the quadrangle originally planned for Red House so the Burne-Jones family could live there ("Philip Webb: A New Vision for Domestic Space").

It was not to be. The sad details of the summer of 1864 are described by the National Trust ("The Architectural History of Red House") and Fiona MacCarthy. Young Philip Burne-Jones contracted scarlet fever; his mother, Georgiana, contracted it as well. She gave premature birth to a son, named Christopher, who lived only three weeks. Following Georgiana's long recovery, the idea of moving to Red House was abandoned. With this confluence of circumstances – the long commute, the increased demands for production, the Burne-Jones family's decision to remain in London – Morris decided to sell Red House. It would be the only home he ever owned. In 1865, the Morris family moved to Queen Square in Bloomsbury, London, to a flat located in the same building with The Firm's business offices (MacCarthy 194).

Kelmscott Manor

After five years of living in London, Morris again wanted to move back out of the densely-populated city to a more rural area. MacCarthy notes that, ostensibly, this was due to his distress at the amount of pollution to which his daughters were exposed every day (MacCarthy 275). However, MacCarthy points out that an additional consideration is that the relationship between his wife Jane and his friend and business partner, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, was the subject of public speculation and gossip. There is no record that Morris ever directly addressed their relationship, either in person or in his writing. MacCarthy notes that “by 1870, Morris had most likely accepted their relationship was sexual” (MacCarthy 340).

Kelmscott Manor was built in 1570 in the town of Kelmscott, West Oxfordshire, an area between the city of Oxford and The Cotswolds. Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti leased the Manor together beginning in 1870 (Cooper 228). The manor was intended as a rural retreat, not a primary residence, for the Morris family. Both Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti retained homes in London; Morris actually retained both a family home in West London and a room of his own in Bloomsbury, near the offices of The Firm. Morris loved the manor house and the open countryside, and Rossetti despised the isolation. Both Cooper (228) and MacCarthy state that Morris seemed to have accepted the relationship shared by Jane and Dante Gabriel Rossetti; however, Morris never stayed at Kelmscott Manor for more than three days when Dante Gabriel Rossetti was present (MacCarthy 318).

The friendship that the two men had shared for more than a dozen years unraveled during their shared tenancy of Kelmscott Manor. In 1870, Dante Gabriel Rossetti had

Elizabeth Siddall Rossetti exhumed in order to retrieve a collection of his poetry that he had buried with her eight years prior. The critical reaction to the publication of this collection contributed to his mental breakdown in 1872. During the period when the two men shared the lease (1870-1874), Morris travelled to Iceland twice and to Italy once. These trips were taken with friends and business associates; Jane did not join him on these travels. By the end of 1874, Dante Gabriel Rossetti had left Kelmscott Manor for the final time. Morris then moved to buy out his business partners. In March 1875, The Firm was replaced by Morris & Company, with William Morris as the sole proprietor. Burne-Jones and Webb, with whom he maintained lifelong friendships, continued to design for him in addition to their own artistic endeavors.

Morris & Company was formed in 1875, approximately twenty-one years after Morris had graduated from Oxford. Both mathematically and figuratively, 1875 was almost exactly the halfway mark of William Morris's career. With the dissolution of The Firm, Morris no longer needed to reach consensus with his partners regarding business decisions such as clients, products, or methods. At the same time as he became the sole proprietor of his own business, Morris became more politically active; he embraced socialism, founded socialist societies, and spoke at political functions. The year 1875 marks not only the year Morris & Company was founded; it also marks a change in Morris's interests. He had evolved from creating the poetry and painting of Pre-Raphaelite style to creating decorative arts in the Arts and Crafts style. He wrote less Arthurian-inspired poetry, and more political prose. Yet, through these changes in his works and their styles, his ideologies did not alter much. Throughout the second half of

his career, Morris maintained devotion to Ruskin's ideology, and applied that ideology both to the art he created and the politics he espoused.

CHAPTER FIVE: LET'S GET POLITICAL: WILLIAM MORRIS AND HIS SOCIALIST UTOPIA

The year 1875 marked an inflection point for William Morris. He had achieved fame as a poet, a painter, and as a decorative artist. His first commissioned painting adorned the Oxford Union Library. The decorative arts firm he had co-founded had been lauded for its exhibit at the 1862 International Exhibition in London; this led to increased popularity and demand for their household products. The Firm produced more than decorative arts; they were commissioned to create stained glass windows and ecclesiastical objects, such as altar cloths, for new and restored churches. In the early 1870s, some of his partners in The Firm seemed to be losing interest in their shared business. One partner seemed to have too much interest in Morris's wife Jane. In 1875, Morris bought out his partners' interests, retaining Burne-Jones and Webb both as friends, consultants, and occasional collaborators. Both his partnership and his friendship with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, strained for years due to Rossetti's affair with Jane Morris, were terminated. Morris became the sole proprietor of the business, which he renamed Morris & Co. As he no longer had to share decision-making with partners, Morris was free to make his own choices regarding the products offered and the processes he used to create those products. He had both his own inherited wealth and the income from his company which allowed him to develop his interest and influence in a new field: politics. Morris's socialist writings and activities were, ironically, supported by his capitalism and his inherited wealth.

Like the Pre-Raphaelites, Morris believed that art should illustrate the beauty of commonplace events and occurrences; inspiration for his embroideries, wallpapers, and

fabrics were drawn from the gardens at Red House and Kelmscott Manor. Like Ruskin, he believed that all art forms are equal; he eschewed painting to create decorative arts that adorned private homes and churches. Unlike the artists and philosophers who preceded him, Morris used his art to support his political endeavors. He achieved only limited success in creating art that was accessible to the public, and that success was earned through his work on and for religious buildings. He came closer to achieving his socialist ideals in the way he treated his employees, and through the creation of artists' guilds, than he did through the creation of his art. During his lifetime, the majority of Morris's work was only accessible to those with means. Morris's complicated legacy is twofold. First, he supported his socialist political activity using personal wealth obtained through inheritance and capitalism. Second, his artistry is accessible in the twenty-first century due to the use of modern technologies that he most assuredly would have despised, and to many who are unaware of his motivation and methods. However, despite the fact that he did not completely achieve his goals during his lifetime, his writings and works provided the evolutionary bridge between the Pre-Raphaelites and Art Nouveau.

Shortly after launching Morris & Co, Morris became involved in environmental and political activities that developed from his business interests. In 1877, Morris and Webb co-founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). According to the organization's website, "the SPAB was established in response to the work of Victorian architects whose enthusiasm for harmful restoration caused irreparable damage" ("About Us"). Morris's interest in architectural conservation drew from his childhood fascination with medieval buildings and ruins, and his adoption of Ruskin's

belief in preservation rather than restoration (Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*). Morris's opposition to the restoration and refurbishment of ancient churches led to a falling-out with the architect George Frederick Bodley, who had provided The Firm with several commissions for stained glass and ecclesiastical decorations in the 1860s.

Morris biographer, Edward Thompson, addressed both Morris's passion for the topic as well as his personality;

The Society, which Morris dubbed "Anti-Scrape," was formed in the next month, and Morris became its Honorary Secretary. Morris's enthusiasm was supplemented by the tact and persistence of Philip Webb. At the first annual meeting in June. . . a manifesto, drafted by Morris, together with some passages reprinted from Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, were issued by the Society. From this time until the end of his life, the Anti-Scrape never ceased to occupy a part of Morris's time. (228)

Morris had abandoned his faith during his time at Oxford, but still fulfilled commissions that helped beautify ecclesiastical settings. Morris was not motivated by any spirituality, but by aesthetics. His contributions to the preservation of these public spaces (e.g., churches, the Oxford Union Library) was the closest he came to achieving art that was accessible to many, not just those who could afford the pricey items produced by his decorative arts firm.

After launching Morris & Co., Morris began to experiment with textile production. Morris's curiosity about textile production allowed him to learn more about the creation of the fabric and the dyes that were used. According to Fiona MacCarthy, Morris spent much of his time 1875-1878 learning about silk dyeing in Staffordshire.

Morris was displeased with the quality of the chemical dyes, and chose to use natural dyes, such as indigo, instead. After learning about dyes, Morris began using those dyes to create silk weavings (348-352). The Morris & Co. workshops had become crowded due to both the increased staff required for production and to the number and size of equipment needed for the items Morris was adding to the portfolio. Morris wanted a single location in which all production could be housed. In June 1881, Morris leased a seven-acre property on the Wandle River, south of London, where the river's flow powered watermills for other industries. The property had formerly been a textile mill. In keeping with Morris's dedication to preservation rather than restoration, "he refused to pull down any of the existing buildings and apart from some minor alterations they remained unchanged until the works closed in 1940. . . Morris adapted the buildings to suit his needs" ("Historical Overview of Merton Priory"). Morris most likely also knew that the site was near the ruins of the medieval Merton Abbey. After his alterations to the property, Merton Abbey Works housed the production of Morris & Co. fabric dyeing, Jacquard weavings, carpet weavings, tapestry weavings, stained glass, and block printing. Wallpaper was not produced at Merton Abbey Works; instead, production was subcontracted to an external company.

The embroidery department, which had enjoyed continued success since the early days of The Firm, was also not physically located at Merton Abbey Works. Much of the embroidery work was made by women. Jane Burden Morris and her sister, Elizabeth, had been deeply involved with embroidery production for The Firm; later, at Morris & Co., they were joined by William and Jane's daughters, Jenny and May. Jane and May, in turn, were both supervisors of the embroidery divisions of both iterations of The Firm.

One of the most recognizable projects completed by Jane and May Morris, with assistance from other embroiderers, is William Morris' bed in Kelmscott Manor.



Figure 17. Bedcurtains and pelmet, 1891-1893. Bedspread completed in 1910. Work of Jane Burden Morris and Mary "May" Morris.



Figure 18. Bedspread detail.

Embroidery did not require large equipment or space, and the employees of the embroidery division were able to complete their projects at home.

Morris had delved into a deeper understanding of dyeworks in 1875-1878 to learn about production of fabrics for his firm. In addition to learning about dyes and the dyeing processes, he was reminded of the pollution created by industrial factories and, in the case of the dyeworks, the chemicals they used. Another unforeseen consequence was his awareness of the lives of the workers and their living and working conditions.

MacCarthy stated that working conditions at the Abbey, while not on par with modern

standards, were better than at most other contemporary factories. Some employees did enjoy profit sharing, but the majority were paid by the piece – including most of the embroiderers, who were predominantly women (429-434). MacCarthy also addressed one of the recurring issues that would haunt Morris through his political activities: despite the fact that Morris espoused liberty, equality, and fraternity, he claimed that he could not run a socialist company in a capitalist society (454-459).

After establishing the production center at Merton Abbey Works, Morris began training John Henry Dearle (1859-1932) as his tapestry apprentice. Dearle had originally been hired in 1878 as a sales assistant in the Morris & Co. Oxford Street showroom, and exhibited talent as a designer. Under Morris's tutelage, Dearle took on some of the tapestry commissions. Morris soon charged Dearle with the supervision and training of the tapestry apprentices. As Morris's interests in politics grew, he left more responsibilities to Dearle, including designing patterns for textiles and fabrics. Dearle also learned embroidery from May Morris, who had been named director of the embroidery department in 1885. By 1890, with Morris in declining health, Dearle was named head designer for Morris & Co., and was responsible for much of the day-to-day operations at Merton Abbey Works. Many of Dearle's patterns were erroneously – and, in some cases, deliberately – attributed to Morris. Linda Parry, author and textile historian at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, championed Dearle's work and, in doing so, countered years of criticism and denigration of his artistry (Parry 9-10).



Figure 19. "Granada" woven furnishing fabric, 1884. Velvet brocade.

With his trusted apprentice managing the factory operations, Morris began devoting more time to another pet cause: political activity. Beginning in 1881, Morris became active in politics. He was at first a member of the Radical Union, but soon left that group and, in 1883, became a member of the Democratic Federation, a pro-Marxist organization, that had been formed in 1881. Within months, he was one of the group's leaders. He put his creative skills to use by designing the organization's membership card (MacCarthy 484) and co-authoring their manifesto, *Socialism Made Plain*. The manifesto included demands for an eight-hour working day, better housing for workers, and free compulsory education for all children that provided free school meals (MacCarthy 472).

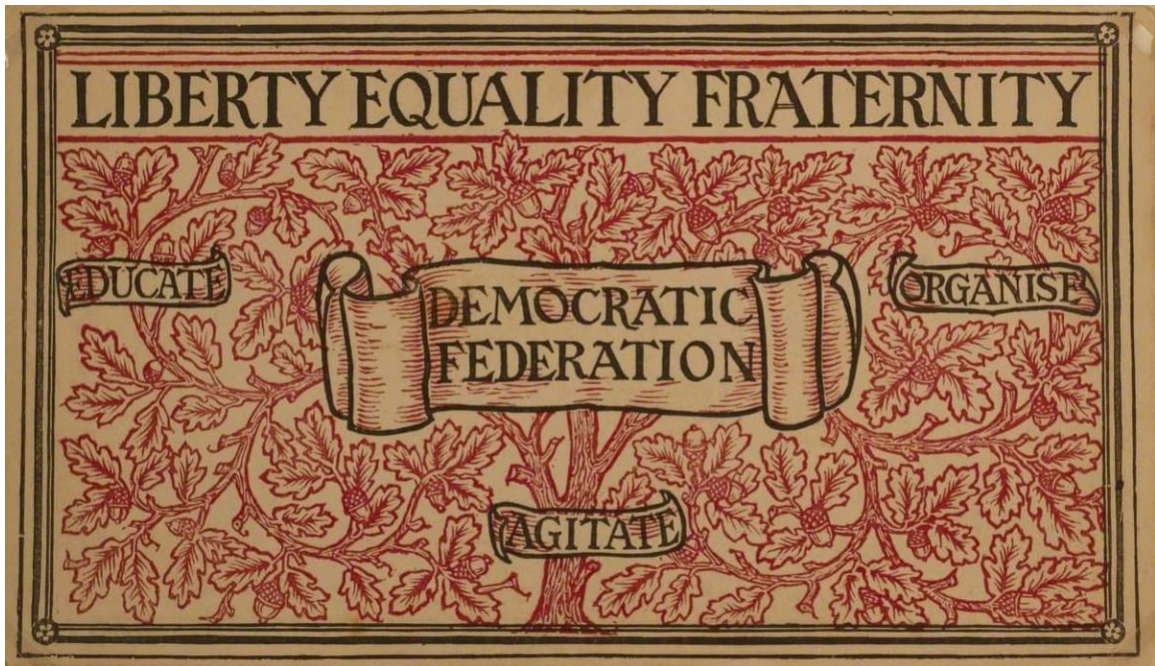


Figure 20. Membership card for the Democratic Federation, designed by William Morris.

Morris accepted an invitation to speak about “Democracy and Art” at Oxford in November 1883. He openly embraced socialism, which outraged many of the attendees and became a national news item (MacCarthy 477-478). MacCarthy states that Morris became so involved in political activities that he spent less time with Burne-Jones, who thought that the members of the Democratic Federation were exploiting Morris for his fame (481). The two friends were, by this point, politically divergent. When Tennyson died in October 1892, Morris was invited to assume the role of Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom. He declined the offer, unwilling to be associated with the monarchy. Morris was appalled when the politically conservative Burne-Jones accepted a baronetcy in 1894. Knowing that Burne-Jones accepted the honor for the sake of his son, Morris stated, “A man can be an ass for the sake of his children” (Flanders, 259).

There was turbulence within the Democratic Federation in 1884. Following a renaming and internal restructuring, the organization split into two factions. Morris and his supporters left, and Morris founded the Socialist League in December 1884 (MacCarthy 584).

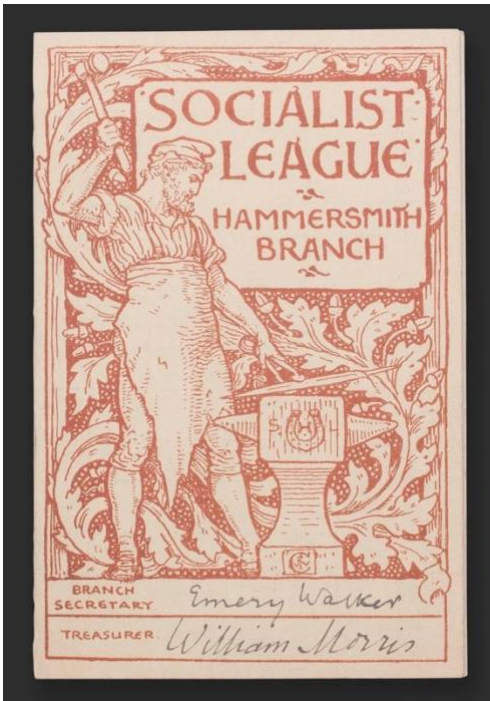


Figure 21. Membership card for the Socialist League, Hammersmith Branch. Designed by William Morris.

MacCarthy's biography of Morris includes information about his experiences with the Socialist League and his eventual ouster. Over the next five years, Morris devoted himself to his political activities. He established branches of the Socialist League throughout the United Kingdom and visited Dublin to speak on behalf of Irish independence. He spoke in lecture halls, clubs, and on street corners, and was arrested twice: once for being an agitator, and once for fighting with a police officer (MacCarthy 528). Morris developed and edited the Socialist League's weekly journal, *Commonweal*, which was first published in February 1885; as he had done with *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, Morris fully supported this journal with his own money.

Commonweal ran articles from socialist luminaries such as Friedrich Engels as well as Morris's own essays, poetry and serialized novels (MacCarthy 511).

Three years after Morris founded the Socialist League, infighting threatened that organization. A faction of anarchists became increasingly outspoken regarding the direction of the Socialist League. By the end of 1889, the anarchists had full control of the Socialist League, and stripped all leadership away from Morris. Morris left the Socialist League in 1890. Although he remained supportive of socialist activities, he reduced his activism – partly due to declining health, and partly due to a return to artistic creativity.

Frank Sharp wrote a short biography of Isabella Morris Gilmore for the *Journal of William Morris Studies*; his article and MacCarthy's references to Isabella Morris Gilmore reflect the same information. In addition to his political activity, William Morris was also personally and practically supportive of his sister, Isabella Morris Gilmore, and her work as an Anglican Deaconess among the poor of South London. Gilmore had become a nurse after her husband died in 1882. She entered the ministry in 1887, shortly after the Anglican Church had resurrected the ancient role of the Deaconess. Although she claimed to know little about theology, she stated that she was a good nurse and wanted to care for the poor. Her mother and most of her family disapproved, but her brother William supported her. Her bishop assigned her to an impoverished area of Clapham in South London, where both the male clergy and parishioners were highly skeptical of female religious. Gilmore was charged with establishing a residence for the deaconesses and nurses in training, and was on a limited budget. The residence purchased in Clapham needed restoration, and Gilmore did much of the work herself.

Her brother visited, and in support, he provided furnishings for the chapel and her room. When their mother died in 1894, Gilmore used her inheritance to expand the residence and chapel. Morris asked Webb to design the new chapel's interior; May Morris donated an embroidered altar-cloth. Morris was moved by his sister's generosity, and wrote to her, "I preach socialism; you practise it" (MacCarthy 558-559).

Before he left the Socialist League, Morris had published his utopian novel, *News from Nowhere*. It was originally published as a serial in *Commonweal*, and subsequently published in book form in 1891; by the turn of the century, it had been translated into Dutch, French, German, Italian, and Swedish. The title is reminiscent of Thomas More's *Utopia*; More created the word "utopia," drawn from two Greek words "ou," meaning "no," and "topos," meaning "place." "Utopia," translated from Greek, means "no place" or "nowhere." MacCarthy writes that Morris was a great admirer of More, and used to read *Utopia* aloud at Kelmscott Manor. Morris considered *Utopia* to be one of his top 100 books, and even published his own illuminated version of it in Kelmscott Press (MacCarthy 16). Not only are the titles similar, but the plots are as well: a traveler finds himself in a strange socialist land where the laws that existed are – relative to the times – progressive.

More's story, a frame tale told in the first person, is that of a traveler who has visited the faraway island of Utopia. *News from Nowhere*, also a frame tale told in the first person, adds an element of science fiction; it is the story of a Londoner who falls asleep in the late nineteenth century and awakes in the early twenty-first century. In Morris's work, the narrator is absolutely befuddled by the London that is only barely recognizable and by the practices of the people he encounters. The boatman who

transports him down the Thames refuses to accept payment. The narrator quickly adopts the ruse of being a foreigner in a strange land, not having visited for many years, and unsure of the social norms of the land. The boatman agrees to guide him, and takes him first to breakfast. He is enjoying his breakfast with his guides, when a sign in the breakfast room gives him pause:

As I was putting the first mouthfuls into my mouth, my eye caught a carved and gilded inscription on the panelling, behind what we should have called the High Table in an Oxford college hall, and a familiar name in it forced me to read in through. Thus it ran: *Guests and neighbours, on the site of this guest-hall once stood the lecture-room of the Hammersmith Socialists. Drink a glass to the memory! May 1962.* It is difficult to tell you how I felt as I read these words, and I suppose my face showed how much I was moved, for both my friends looked curiously at me, and there was silence between us for a little while. (Morris 54)

Upon questioning, the narrator introduces himself as William, and adopts the surname Guest. He provides autobiographical details in keeping with Morris's, such as identifying his age (56) and his birthplace (Walthamstow). As his guides lead him around, they ask questions about their past history, such as an event in 1955 when public housing was plowed under and a forest restored; 1955 is of course in Guest's future.

As Guest is taken throughout London, barely able to envision the city he remembers, he discovers that there is no charge for goods or services; people seem amused when he tries to pay for goods, such as a new pipe. Guest is taken to an old man, a historian, who explains the current lifestyle and how it came to be. The Socialist

movement did precipitate a cultural change that led to revolution and a civil war in 1952. During the civil war, many of the structures of governments and capitalism had been destroyed. Those who survived chose to establish a communist society. The people are warm, open, and accepting, and they experience joy in their work; their work is in caring for the needs of each other and the more vulnerable members of their society. They live in touch with nature, not reliant on factory-made items. There is no private property and no money. There is no mandatory schooling; people may pick up books and read if they choose, but that is not required. If a person wishes to learn a trade, it is done for the simple joy of doing something well, not for financial or personal gain. Surprisingly, there is no government, and no laws. People are willingly, deliberately, choosing to live and collaborate in a peaceful, communal fashion.

After several days of boating up and down the Thames, and talking with his new friends, Guest realizes that he is fading from view. His friends seem unable to see him. He wakes up, back in his dingy rented flat, unwilling to believe that it had all been a dream. He decides that his dream can be a vision of what is possible; “If others can see it as I have seen it, then it may be called a vision rather than a dream” (Morris 228).

Morris described a joyful, collaborative existence in *News of Nowhere* that harkened to the joyful, collaborative experiences he’d had working with his friends on the Oxford Union Library and on Red House.

As MacCarthy states,

The most strikingly original aspects of the story have to do with art and the environment. *News from Nowhere* is Morris’s fictional reworking for the claims made in his lecture “Art under Plutocracy” for an inclusive

concept of art extending to the aspects of all the externals of our life. Art was not just painting, sculpture, architecture, it was also the shapes and colors of all household goods; art was even the arrangement of the fields for tillage and pasture, the management of towns and of our highways. . . . William Morris's hopes, as expressed in his visionary novel *News from Nowhere*, involved the complete dismantling of the stultifying structures of society and their replacement by a freer, more equable and fluid way of life. Morris became convinced that only from the lives of a truly democratic people could come a genuinely living art. (MacCarthy 16-39)

With this analysis, MacCarthy shows how Morris was able to unite the two ideologies to which he had devoted his life. Although he could not achieve this in practice, he was able to do so in his writing: create a perfect communal society that embraces the beauty of art in all its forms, thus making art available to all. Ruskin is not referenced anywhere in *News from Nowhere*, but the novel is steeped in the belief that all art forms are equal, whether a gold belt buckle (Morris 50), a handcarved pipe (Morris 73), or the sight of a hayfield full of hay-makers in different, brightly-colored clothing (Morris 178). By adding the socio-political aspect of a communal setting, Morris strengthens Ruskin's argument that all art forms are equal; in *News from Nowhere*, as there is neither competition nor financial reward, all art forms are equally valuable, and equally accessible.

In 1890, Morris left the Socialist League and reduced his political activism. Despite the fact that he was in declining health, he returned to artistic endeavors. Morris & Co. accepted a commission that must have seemed like the culmination of lifetime

interests: a series of six woven tapestries, illustrating the legend of the Holy Grail.

Commissioned in 1890, the tapestries were a collaborative effort of Burne-Jones, Morris, and Dearle. They were created at Merton Abbey Mills over the course of four years, the sixth tapestry was completed in 1894 (Parry 146-147).

Morris's final new enterprise was Kelmscott Press. Morris and Burne-Jones, who has always been interested in medieval books and illuminated manuscripts, collaborated again on a project that would inspire specialty publishing and printing. Contemporary printers of the time used a rolling printer, which often produced poor-quality printings. Morris preferred hand press machines. The medieval hand presses were wooden, and indented the printing into the paper. The nineteenth-century hand presses were made of iron. As could be expected from Morris, he experimented with different hand presses, inks, and types of papers – including vellum and his own handmade paper – to achieve the finished product he wanted. Not only did Morris research the mechanics of printing, he also invented three different typefaces. According to Peterson (82-87), Morris's process was painstaking. He collaborated with a friend and neighbor, bookbinder and collector Emery Walker, to develop his typefaces. Walker took pictures of old typefaces and enlarged them so Morris could see the details in the medieval lettering. Once Morris had developed his typefaces (first tracing the old, then freehanding the new), he would complete the alphabet and punctuation. Walker would photograph the whole set, then minimize the pictures so the letters could be outlined directly on to the wooden blocks. Peterson pointed out the juxtaposition of Morris using a modern practice (photography) while attempting to resurrect medieval printing methods (Peterson 82-87).

The majority of Kelmscott Press printings were of texts that were plain or simply decorated, such as the volumes of poetry written by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Edmund Spenser. Several, however, contained decorations by Morris and illustrations by Burne-Jones, including the Kelmscott editions of *Utopia* (1893) and *Beowulf* (1895). The Kelmscott edition of *News from Nowhere* (1895) features sketches of Kelmscott Manor for *The Nature of Gothic*, *A Chapter from the Stones of Venice* (1892), Morris contributed a forward that highlighted his thoughts about Ruskin:

For the lesson which Ruskin here teaches us is that art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour; that it is possible for man to rejoice in his work, for, strange as it may seem to us to-day, there have been times when he did rejoice in it. . . John Ruskin the teacher of morals and politics (I do not use this work in the newspaper sense), has done serious and solid work towards that new-birth of Society, without which genuine art, the expression of man's pleasure in his handiwork, must inevitably cease altogether, and with it the hopes of the happiness of mankind (Morris i-v)

This reinforces his messaging in *News from Nowhere*; that art, labor, and equality are all interdependent. "Genuine art" need not be formal artwork in a museum or gallery. Ruskin believed that all forms of art are important, and William Rossetti wrote that the purpose of art is "to elevate the ordinary." Morris spent his life trying to achieve this unification, through his decorative arts, his writings, and through his Kelmscott Press.

On May 8, 1896, Morris completed *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, now newly imprinted*, more commonly known as the *Kelmscott Chaucer*. This project had taken

Morris and Burne-Jones four years to complete. Knowing that Morris was in declining health, Burne-Jones dedicated every Sunday to the project, fearing that Morris would die before the project was complete. Fewer than 500 copies were printed: 425 had a plain paperboard binding, with an additional 13 printed on vellum, and 48 bound in pigskin with silver clasps (“The Kelmscott Chaucer”). This was the culmination of a shared lifetime of interests for Burne-Jones and Morris, who had read Chaucer to each other in their room at Oxford. Peterson cited contemporary sources as identifying the Kelmscott Chaucer as the finest book ever printed and the second most significant printed work, second only to the Gutenberg Bible (Peterson 228-229).

Morris died five months later at his Kelmscott House in London; he was 62 years old. His body was transported to the Cotswolds, and he was buried near his beloved Kelmscott Manor, in a corner of St. George’s churchyard in the village of Kelmscott, Oxfordshire. Philip Webb designed the family gravestone, under which Jane, Jenny, and May were, in turn, also buried (MacCarthy 676-677).

William Morris dedicated his life to the pursuit of beauty. He had adopted William Rossetti’s call to “elevate the ordinary,” as well as John Ruskin’s belief that all forms of art are equal; the decorative arts for which Morris is best-known today spring from the intersection of these two ideologies. Morris was not content to create art that could only be appreciated by the bourgeoisie who could afford his creations. He became a political activist who used his writing and speech-giving skills to support the socialist movements in the United Kingdom and across Europe. Although his ideas regarding the joy of collective work originated in his privilege and status, he did work to extend that way of life to the populace.

Morris's legacy is complicated, particularly when evaluating his art in all its forms (poet, novelist, painter, designer, weaver, glazier, publisher) through the lens of the socialism he espoused. He supported his socialist activities by using funds acquired through inheritance and participating in capitalist markets. Although he did not achieve this ideal society, he did inject his philosophies into the Arts and Crafts movement. Those who followed were able to fulfill this ambition through the creation of art that was truly for the people.

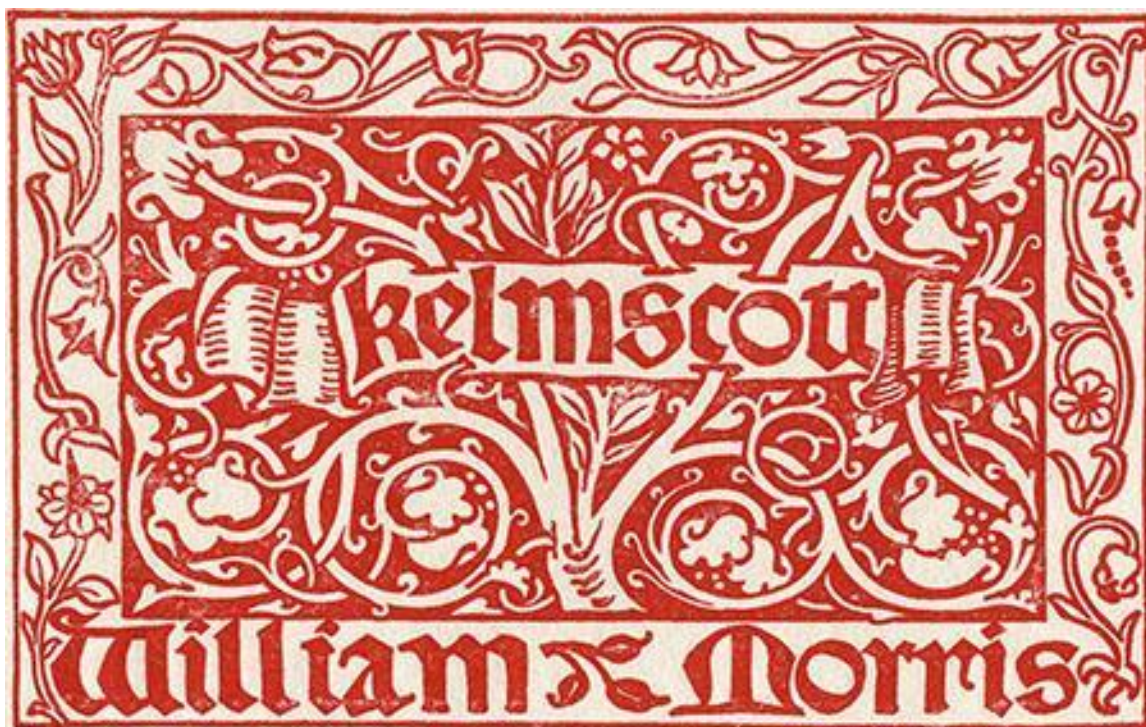


Figure 22. Kelmscott Press printer's mark. Designed by William Morris.

CHAPTER SIX: “THERE’S NO SUCH THING AS NEW ART.”

On December 26, 1894, a world-famous actress phoned the Parisian printing company that had produced the publicity posters for her recent projects. The run of her play had been extended, and she wanted new publicity to advertise the extension. She told the manager of the printing company that she wanted her new posters to be completed within the week. After the call ended, the manager looked frantically around the studio. None of the artists who had previously created publicity posters for this actress were available. There was only one other person in the room; a Moravian-born artist, reviewing proofs for a different project, who had achieved moderate success as an illustrator during his six years living in Paris. Desperate, the manager explained the situation to the artist, and the artist immediately began sketching. On January 1, 1895, when the two-meter tall poster was first displayed throughout Paris, it created such a positive sensation that the actress offered the artist a contract to provide all of her publicity posters for the next six years. It was this work for the great Sarah Bernhardt – a poster for her starring role in *Gismonda* – that launched Alfons Mucha to international fame. Through his mid-career body of work, during which he became famous for his advertising posters, Mucha achieved what the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and William Morris had attempted; he created artwork that was accessible to the public, using the ordinary advertising poster to do so. Mucha’s graphic designs, including the artwork that advertised Sarah Bernhardt’s productions, realized the goals of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic. He “elevated the ordinary” (“Project Gutenberg eBook of *The Germ*”) and made art accessible – because he used his art for advertising during his years in Paris (and later, by creating art for public spaces in Prague). Artistically, his work highlights the

evolution from Arts and Crafts to Art Nouveau. Mucha, like Morris, was an artist who produced work in several forms. Unlike Morris and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Mucha produced art for mass consumption. The form for which he is arguably best known, the poster, made his art accessible to the population, not just the elite and bourgeois who could afford fine art and artisanal-crafted decorative arts for their own private spaces.

According to Jiri Mucha and to the biography on the Mucha Foundation website, Alfonse Maria Mucha was born on July 24, 1860, in Ivančice, a small town in Moravia, in what was then part of the Austrian Empire (now the Czech Republic). He was one of six children born to his father, Andreas (Ondrej) Mucha; Alfonse was the first child born of Andreas's second wife, Amalie. The Mucha family had a modest income from Andreas's employment as a court usher; Amalie, a miller's daughter, had been employed as a governess in Vienna prior to her marriage. Mucha was born during the Czech National Revival (c. 1790-1914), a nationalist movement that sought to resurrect the Czech language, culture, and identity; he identified as Czech, and "grew up to be a passionate believer in an independent Czech nation" ("Alphonse Mucha Timeline").

From an early age, Mucha exhibited talent in both visual and performing arts. Neighbors who were impressed by his work provided him with art supplies (Sato 7). He also performed musically as a boy alto and violinist. After he completed the compulsory (primary) education, his music teacher sent him to Brno to continue his musical studies. He became a choral singer at the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul, and began attending the gymnasium (secondary school). When his voice changed, he left the



Figure 23. Advertising poster for Sarah Bernhardt's *Gismonda*, by Alphonse Maria Mucha. 1895.

choir, and continued playing the violin during religious services. He continued his musical studies at his gymnasium (secondary school, roughly equivalent to a modern US high school), and began to explore additional studies and employment in visual arts. He

applied to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, but was rejected. In 1880, Mucha moved to Vienna, the capital of the Austrian Empire, and found work as a scenery painter in a firm that provided sets for Viennese theaters. He relished the cultural experiences of Vienna, visiting sites of cultural and artistic significance (Sato 9). During his time in Vienna, he became acquainted with Hans Makart, a well-known painter who specialized in murals and large-scale paintings of historical events. His influence on Mucha became evident in the later part of Mucha's career, particularly in Mucha's two best-known murals, the mural at the 1900 Paris International Exposition for the Bosnia-Herzegovina nation pavilion and *The Slav Epic* (Thiébaud 9).

In December 1881, a fire destroyed the Ringtheater, killing 384. With his firm's largest client gone, Mucha moved north to southern Moravia to look for work. According to Sato (11), Mucha's work in portraiture, decorative arts, and lettering for tombstones was brought to the attention of Count Belasi, a member of the local nobility. Belasi commissioned Mucha to paint murals in his castles, and became Mucha's artistic and financial patron. As Mucha's patron, Belasi brought Mucha with him to view art and museums throughout Italy. Belasi supported Mucha's formal training at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts from 1885-1887. In 1888, still with Belasi's support, Mucha moved to Paris to continue his artistic studies at two Parisian art academies. Mucha attended the Académie Julian; "Founded at a time when art was about to undergo a long series of crucial mutations, the Académie Julian played host to painters and sculptors of every kind and persuasion and never tried to make them hew to any one particular line" ("An Art School That Also Taught Life"). Regarding his father's time at the Académie Julian, Jirí Mucha wrote,

His meeting with a handful of students at the Académie Julian who did not consider painting as an end in itself was infinitely comforting to him. . . In addition, his fellow-pupils at the Lefebvre studio put him on the trail of many other things that were new to him. He was not a great reader and such reading as he did was confined to Czech and German literature. Now for the first time he learnt of the existence of William Morris, Maeterlinck, Verlaine. (Mucha 40)

In 1889, Mucha enrolled at the Académie Colarossi, where he met Paul Gauguin. Toward the end of 1889, Belasi ended his financial support, and Mucha remained in Paris to seek employment as an artist.

In Paris, Mucha was connected to two supportive communities: one, of artists, and the second, of Slavs. Through these communities, Mucha found housing and employment as an illustrator for magazines and books. He provided illustrations and cover art for a weekly magazine that published serialized stories and novels. With this steady employment, he achieved financial stability. He bought a glass-plate camera and a harmonium; in or around 1895, Mucha used the camera to take a picture of his friend Paul Gauguin seated at the harmonium in Mucha's apartment.

Mucha had been in his publisher's studio on December 26, 1894, reviewing proofs for his magazine illustrations, when Bernhardt called the publishing firm Lemercier to request the publicity posters for *Gismonda*. Mucha had rendered illustrations of Bernhardt twice previously: once, for a magazine *Costume au Théâtre*



Figure 24. Photograph of Paul Gauguin seated at the harmonium in Mucha's Paris apartment. Taken by Mucha, c. 1895.

(Theater Costumes), and the second time, for a magazine *Le Galois*, at the opening of *Gismonda* in October 1894 ("Alphonse Mucha Timeline"). That serendipitous interaction on December 26, 1894, propelled Mucha from moderate success to international fame.

When Bernhardt offered Mucha a six-year contract to create all of the posters advertising her theater productions, she also provided a six-year contract to a new printing company, Champenois. The new printer had a larger facility, more printing machines, and a larger staff; they were able to fulfill larger orders in less time. Bernhardt remained impressed with Mucha's work, and commissioned other artistic endeavors from

him as well. During their partnership, he designed theatrical sets, programs, costumes, and jewelry for her. The jewelry he designed was created Georges Fouquet, with whom Mucha would collaborate on additional projects in future years.

Mucha's contract with Bernhardt was not exclusive. He was able to accept commissions to provide advertising posters for all manner of products: Job cigarette papers, Moët et Chandon champagne, baby food, chocolate, beer, bicycles, railways. In collaboration with Champenois, Mucha also created decorative posters that did not advertise any product; these posters (sometimes called panels) were mass-produced by Champenois, and were available for sale. These panels were often created in a series, such as *The Seasons* (1896-1897). *The Arts* (1898) included panels personifying poetry, dance, music, and painting. *Flowers* (1898) showed women surrounded by roses, carnations, lilies, and irises. These panels were sold in multiple formats, including individual prints, multiple images on a single print, and as postcards. Sato (43) estimates that Mucha created over 100 panels between 1896 and 1904.

Mucha was well-paid for his posters and panels, and dedicated to creating artwork that was easily accessible to the public. Jirí Mucha quotes his father as saying,

Champenois then wanted me to do various other things for him; I did the panneaux representing the four seasons of the year. These were well received, and I was glad that I was engaged on art for the people and not for the closed salons. It was cheap, within everybody's means, and found its way into both well-to-do and poor families. I was not aspiring to reach the rich with my work, I wanted to get near to the people. (92)

Most of Mucha's posters and panels featured a central female figure who dominated the space; the female figure often had long, flowing hair. Unlike the long, thick, wavy hair that adorned the Pre-Raphaelite stunners, the hair in Mucha's work was often stylized, and he used negative space to create those stylized effects. The backgrounds used a combination of natural scenery, flowers, or repeating patterns – and sometimes a combination of all three of these elements.



Figure 25. The Arts: Dance. Poster by Alphonse Mucha, 1898.

The patterns created by William Morris – wallpapers, textiles, tapestries, illuminated manuscripts – featured intricately designed repeating patterns, almost exclusively floral, which had very little (if any) negative spaces. These patterns were also frequently intended to be the focus of the work. In contrast, the repeating patterns in Mucha’s works, which were a combination of floral and geometric patterns, were either part of the background, or designed to highlight a focal point – or both. Mucha’s repeating patterns used negative space, and drew less attention than the (generally female) focal point of his posters and panels. Like Morris, Mucha created textile designs; however, Mucha’s designs were for patterns that were printed on to fabric, which were most often printed in England. According to Jirí Mucha, his father “took his decorative elements from nature, applying the same rules as the village embroiderers and fold artists in his native Moravia” (Mucha 82).

The use of negative space in Mucha’s patterns delineates the evolution from Arts and Crafts to Art Nouveau. Mucha himself stated that the 1900 International Exhibition in Paris “made some contribution toward bringing aesthetic values into Arts and Crafts” (“Alphonse Maria Mucha Biography in Details”). Even though Mucha is now considered to be a groundbreaking Art Nouveau artist, he resisted the label during his lifetime. According to his son, Jini Mucha, he scoffed at the label “Art Nouveau,” and said, “There’s no such thing as new art” (Mucha 66).

Universal Exposition of 1900, Samuel Siegfried Bing, and the origin of “Art Nouveau”

Jirí Mucha argues that “Art Nouveau had its first beginnings in the Arts and Crafts movement” (Mucha 82). The galleries and exhibitions of Samuel Siegfried Bing,

a Parisian art dealer who owned several galleries in Paris, support Jirí Mucha's theory. Bing's primary focus had been on importing Japanese art for his wealthy clients and museums. On December 26, 1895 – exactly one year after Mucha had accepted the commission to create the poster for *Gismonda* – Bing opened a new gallery, named “Le Maison de l'Art Nouveau.” This gallery was in a building that had been designed and commissioned for the express purpose of serving as a gallery of modern art. The gallery included fine art as well as decorative arts: sculpture, furniture, tapestries, and stained glass, including works by William Morris and Louis Comfort Tiffany, among others. At the Universal Exposition of 1900, Bing sponsored an exhibition at the French pavilion, and named the exhibition “Art Nouveau Bing;” the term “Art Nouveau” became part of the international lexicon (“Siegfried Bing”).

As with the Great Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862 in London, the Paris Universal Exposition of 1900 was a World's Fair event, designed to showcase the modern and technological inventions of recent years. It is also the event that provided the first international platform for Art Nouveau across multiple art fields. Mucha's work was on display in several different forms: murals, posters, illustrations, furniture, jewelry, sculpture. These works were shown in the pavilions of France, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and even on the official Exposition banquet menu.

Mucha had requested permission from the Austrian government to paint murals in the pavilion of Bosnia and Herzegovina, highlighting its culture and history (Bosnia and Herzegovina had come under Austrian rule in 1878). Once his proposal was approved, he travelled to Bosnia and Herzegovina to view the landscape and culture. He took photographs and made sketches of scenery, monuments, architecture, and people in their

national costumes. After he returned to Paris, he began work on the murals in the pavilion. The ceilings in the pavilion were over forty feet high. Mucha's previous experiences painting murals and theater scenery, as well as the influence of Makart, were of great benefit to him as he designed and painted these murals (Thiébaud 87). Mucha also created the menu for the Bosnian Pavilion restaurant; the cover figure is of a young girl in traditional Bosnian costume.



Figure 26. Bosnia and Herzegovina Pavilion at the Paris Exhibition by Mucha, 1900.

In addition to his work for the Bosnian pavilion, Mucha also created art for the Austrian and French pavilions. Shortly before the Exposition, Mucha (who was a devout Roman Catholic) had published *Le Pater (The Father)*; this book was designed to be an artistic rendering of The Lord's Prayer. He had developed the premise for this book out of his desire to be viewed as a more serious artist. According to Thiébaud, Mucha explained his plan to illuminate each line of the prayer, "First, a cover page with a symbolist ornament; then the same ornament developed in a kind of variation on each line of the prayer; a page explaining each line in a calligraphic form; and a page rendering the idea of each line in the form of an image" (111). The second page in each series, with the ornament in variation on the prayer, included the Latin words of the prayer. The third page, which explained each line in calligraphic form, was written in French. The pages that explained each line in calligraphic form resembled Morris's Kelmscott illuminated manuscripts, complete with ornately detailed borders around the calligraphic text. Approximately 500 copies were printed in 1899. The sketches and watercolors that he had rendered for *Le Pater* were individually displayed in the Austrian pavilion at the 1900 Exposition. Mucha also created the advertising poster for the Austrian pavilion.

Mucha's work for the French pavilion was work created in multiple media. He created a statue, *Head of a Girl*, in silver and gold, as a display for the Houbigant perfumery. His partnership with Georges Fouquet, which had begun with a design for a bracelet for Sarah Bernhardt, continued during the Exposition; Mucha designed both jewelry and the displays for Fouquet. As a result of his contributions to the Exposition,

Mucha was knighted by the Austrian government and awarded the Legion of Honor by the French government.

Final Parisian Projects: 1899-1904

Mucha's collaborations with Fouquet continued after the Exposition. Fouquet opened a new shop in 1901, and Mucha designed the interior. According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Mucha not only conceived a spectacular series of elaborate jewels executed by Fouquet's Paris atelier but also designed a sumptuous new Fouquet showroom in the rue Royale, where the interior decoration specifically harmonized with the jewelry" ("Georges Fouquet: Pendant").



Figure 27. George Fouquet Boutique. Designed by Alphonse Mucha, 1900.

Like William Morris, Mucha sought to unite the decorative arts with its environment and purpose. Morris designed and built Red House with the intention of tying the furnishings and decorations inside to the gardens outside. For Fouquet's shop, Mucha created a boutique that was its own exquisite jewelry box, complete with bronze peacocks, stained glass, a water fountain, tile mosaic flooring, and carved moldings. The lines and flourishes in the shop interior were reflected in the jewelry; the jewelry, which was frequently designed with semi-precious stones such as opals and mother of pearl, can be viewed as being stylistic extensions of the shop.

Mucha's final large project during his Parisian years was his book, *Documents Décoratifs* (1902). According to Thiébaud, this project developed from Mucha's venture into teaching at the Academy Colarossi, where he taught that flowers and other forms found in nature could be used in decoration. "The object of the course is to permit the student to have the necessary knowledge for artistic decoration, applied to decorative panels, windows, porcelain, enamels, furniture, jewelry, posters, etc" (147-148). Mucha's sketches and illustrations in the book included designs for decorative arts such as furniture, dishware, servingware, flatware, lighting, and a fireplace tool set. The book also included designs for lettering and floral patterns.

Return to Moravia: Patriotic Art in Public Spaces

Beginning in 1904, Mucha was no longer a fixture in Paris. Between 1904-1910, he traveled to the United States almost annually for extended stays of six months. While in the United States, he taught art in New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago. He declined most commercial commissions he was offered, and worked largely in

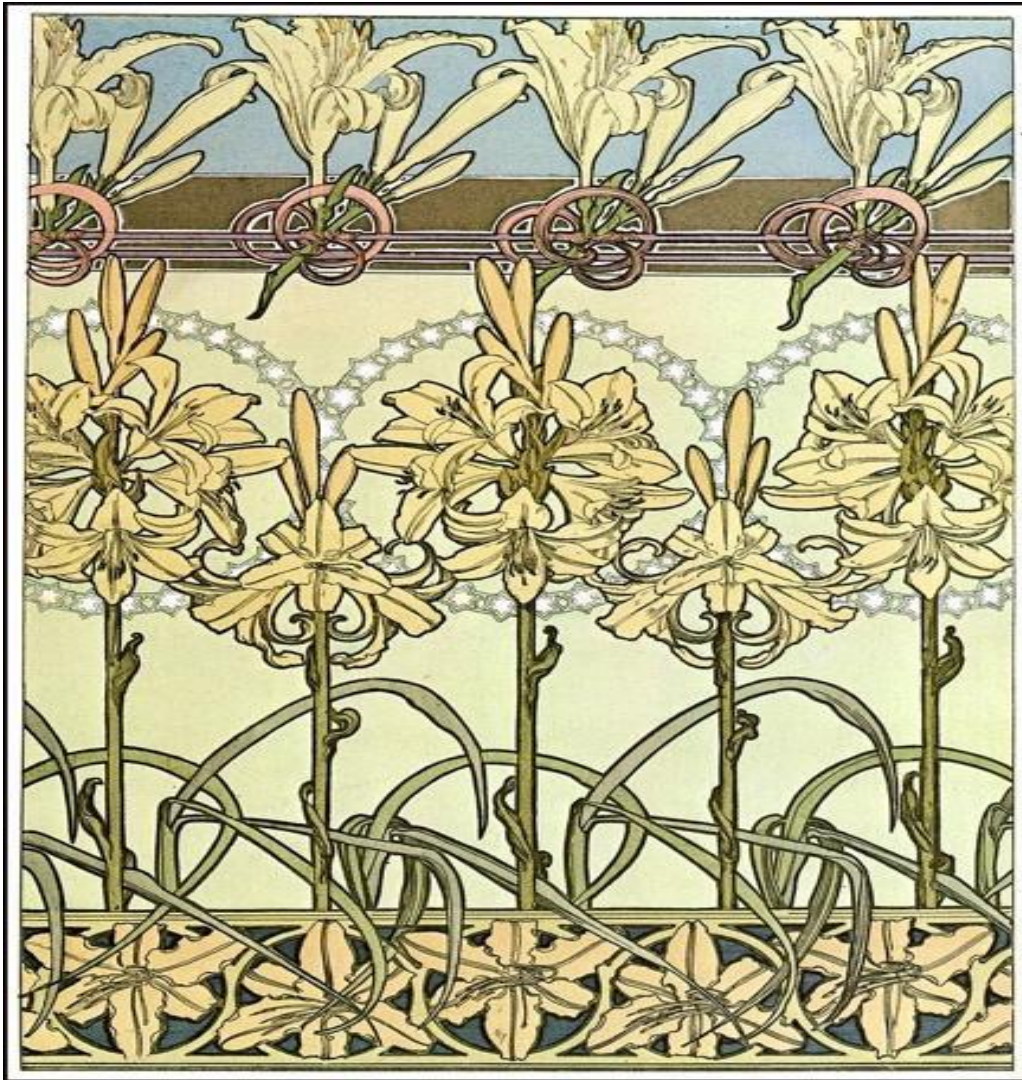


Figure 28. Illustration from book *Documents Décoratifs* by Alphonse Mucha, 1902.

portraiture. He had not given up his dream of being an historical painter; by 1910, he had completed plans for *The Slav Epic*, a series of large historical paintings highlighting the creations and achievements of Slavic people in Eastern Europe. Once he secured funding for his plans, in February 1910, he made the decision to return to Moravia.

European art historian Philippe Thiébaud addressed Mucha's murals in the Municipal House in Prague. Before he started *The Slav Epic*, Mucha accepted a commission to decorate the interior of the Municipal House in Prague (Thiébaud 162). The decision to grant this commission to Mucha resulted in resistance from other artists who saw Mucha as an outsider, due to his years living abroad (Thiébaud 162). Therefore, Mucha's commission was altered; he painted murals in the Mayor's Hall, and other artists decorated the other rooms. Mucha's murals were dedicated to the theme of Slavic contributions to history.

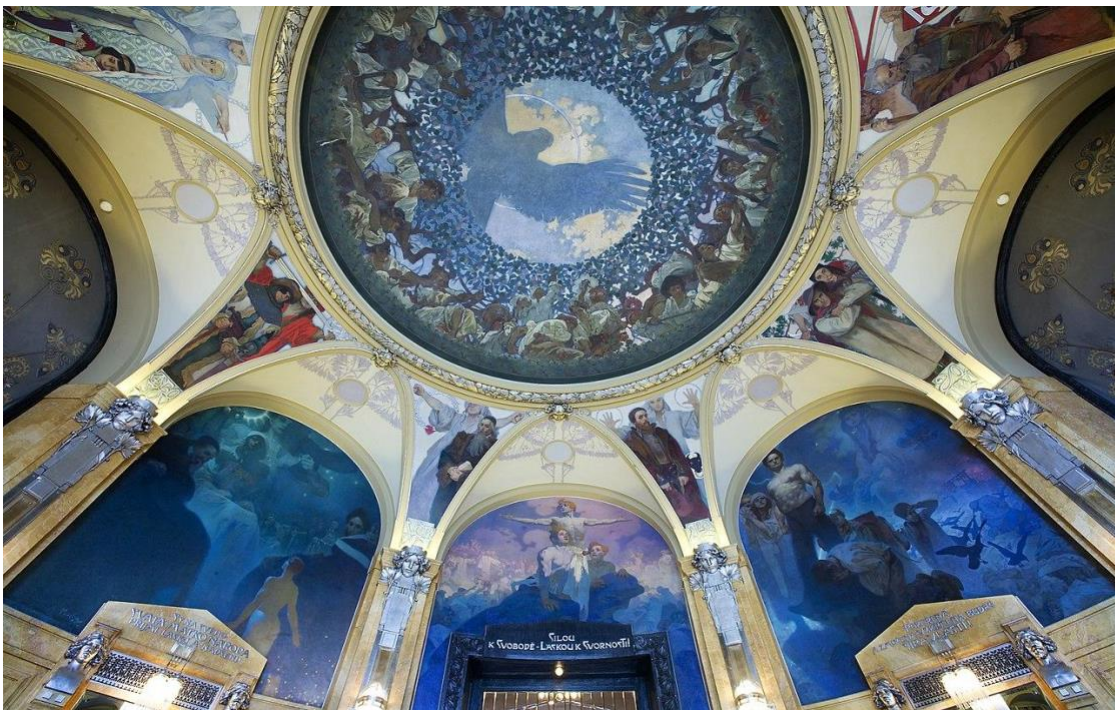


Figure 29. Murals in the Lord Mayor's Hall in the Municipal House in Prague. Painted by Alphonse Mucha, 1910-1911.

After completing his work in the Municipal House in 1911, Mucha was able to begin the work that he considered his masterpiece: *The Slav Epic*. As Mucha had identified with the Czech national movement throughout his life, his goal was to create a public work celebrating the history and achievements of the Slavic people, with half of the paintings highlighting the accomplishments of Slavic people throughout Eastern Europe, and the other half devoted to the Czech people, history, and culture. When it was finished, *The Slav Epic* consisted of twenty paintings, each measuring more than twenty by twenty-six feet. This project took eighteen years to complete, 1910-1928. Mucha worked on *The Slav Epic* during the first World War, and was approximately halfway complete when the Czechoslovak Republic declared its independence from Austria in 1918. Mucha exhibited the eleven completed paintings in Prague in 1919. Speaking at the exhibition's opening, Mucha said,

The mission of the Epic is not completed. Let it announce to foreign friends – and even to enemies – who we were, who we are, and what we hope for. May the strength of the Slav spirit command their respect, because from respect, love is born (Mucha 269).

The entire series was completed in 1928, and the collection was displayed together as part of the celebrations commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Czechoslovak Republic. Mucha created the advertising poster for the exhibition. In contrast to the posters he made in Paris, his signature does not appear as clearly; the contrast between his signature and the background is minimal, making his signature appear as part of the design on the lamp.

This one poster underscores many themes, and the evolution, of Mucha's career. The poster is the form for which he first became world-famous. The subject of the poster is an exhibition of his own masterpiece, and his name appears twice in the poster: once, as the creator of the art on exhibit, and once as the creator of the poster. He used the lettering he designed almost thirty years prior, for *Documents Décoratifs*.



Figure 30. Poster for *The Slav Epic* Exhibition, Brno, by Alphonse Mucha, 1930.

The Slav Epic was Mucha's masterpiece, the culmination of years of study and planning. After the exhibition in 1928, the twenty canvases were put in storage. Mucha would not see them displayed again in his lifetime. He continued to create art, mostly for patriotic and religious causes: Czechoslovak bank notes and postage stamps, as well as stained glass windows for the Roman Catholic cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague. In 1936, Mucha began work on a new project, but never completed it. Hitler annexed the Czechoslovak Republic in March 1939. Mucha, as a "passionate believer in an independent Czech nation" ("Alphonse Mucha Timeline"), was targeted by the Gestapo. Arrested, held, and interrogated in prison, Mucha contracted pneumonia. He was released from prison due to his poor health, and died on July 14, 1939: Bastille Day in the city where he had achieved world fame. Mucha had lived in Paris for over fifteen years. During that time, he achieved what the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and William Morris had attempted to do: elevate the ordinary and make art accessible to all.

Alphonse Mucha was neither a philosopher nor a poet. Unlike the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and William Morris, Mucha did not have a carefully-crafted aesthetic regarding the purpose, meaning, and function of art. His son Jiri noted that Mucha was "introduced to" Morris (Mucha 40), but does not elaborate regarding the depth or manner of that knowledge. There is no evidence that Mucha was even aware of Ruskin or the Pre-Raphaelites, much less articulate about or impacted by their writings. Mucha's art was not restricted to the private parlors of the bourgeoisie, as Morris's had been. Mucha elevated the ordinary advertising poster to an art form and made art that was free and publicly available for everyone to access. By creating mass-produced advertising posters that were contemporaneously (and currently) seen as works of art, he accomplished one

of the goals that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and William Morris were unable to achieve: he created art that was accessible to all.

CONCLUSION

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood considered John Keats as one of their Immortals. His “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1819) addressed the intersection of poetry and fine art; the ode is both the poem he wrote and the artwork on the urn. The poem ends with what may be the most famous lines Keats ever wrote;

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty, -- that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know (Keats).”

The questions surrounding the definition of art and its purpose – beauty and truth being central to most discussions – are timeless. Conversely, as each new artist or scholar contributes to the centuries of accrued knowledge and experience, the discussions become more nuanced. Such conversations – with each other, with the past, and with our future – are not simply esoteric. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood rebelled against the strictures of their time to define a new art, and risked social rejection for doing so. Mucha’s art, born of nationalistic pride, both brought him fame and hastened his death, after months in a Nazi prison.

Morris worked to achieve balances in his life and work that resonate with us today. He struggled to balance and support a socialist ideology, able to do so while living as a member of the gentry and using inherited wealth. He sought to create art that was ecologically sound, even if only a small minority could afford his works. He tried to pay fair (if not equal) wages to all genders before there were any protections for the environment, and only limited protections for workers.

These artists – the members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, William Morris, and Alphonse Mucha – all strove to elevate the lives of their contemporaries. They each

had different methods and audiences, and varying levels of success. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood carefully crafted their ideology and used it as a basis for their art. Although the Brotherhood itself was only active for three years, they inspired a movement that lasted for decades. William Morris's art and political activities were both designed to counter the crushing influences of the Industrial Revolution. Mucha, whose core beliefs were centered in his national identity and his faith, achieved success both as a designer of advertising posters and of murals painted for the public. These artists all struggled with the purpose, meaning, and accessibility of the art they created, and all suffered to different extents. Contemporary audiences who wish to understand the purpose or meaning of art, its economic and ecological impact, or the ability for a diverse population to be exposed to and appreciative of art should be encouraged to consider what the Pre-Raphaelites, Morris, and Mucha contemplated, overcame, and accomplished.

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