

EXHIBITIONS AS PALIMPSEST:

The New Gallery, Regent Street

1888-1910

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Abstract

This thesis marks the first in-depth study of the New Gallery in Regent Street, London, which operated as an exhibition venue from 1888 to 1910. The study proposes that the location and physical attributes of the site and its spaces marked the New Gallery as both unique and versatile and that these qualities made it a particularly appropriate venue for the shifting exhibition scene of the fin de siècle. Using the metaphor of the palimpsest, the thesis opens with an in-depth analysis of the building, uncovering layers of physical, social and artistic histories embedded within its walls. The project then focusses on four case studies, using a close reading of archival and secondary sources, as well as an examination of installation photographs from the exhibitions. The case studies include the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, the Eastman Kodak Photographic Exhibition, the Edward Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition and the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers. The thesis proposes that the New Gallery was pivotal in the art world at the fin de siècle, in the rare position of traversing between the two centuries, embracing both Victorian artists and those who found fame in the Edwardian era. As well as supporting contemporary artists, the New Gallery embraced new types of art including photography and decorative works, thus proving itself to be looking forward to the new century. This study reveals the building itself as central to an understanding of exhibition history in London and engages with a number of wider issues, including the development of London's West End as a retail and commercial centre, opportunities for artists to display and sell their works, and changes in exhibition practice, especially a general move to a *white cube* aesthetic.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of my original work, and that I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university. All sources are acknowledged as references.

Introduction

Regent Street, London, in the late nineteenth century: a place of contradictions and contrasts, with juxtapositions of respectability and depravity represented by the Royal Academy, Bond Street and Grosvenor Square to the West, the Café Royal, theatres and Soho to the East, and the prostitutes of the Colonnade to the South.¹ The vision of the Prince Regent, with John Nash (1752-1835) as principal architect, Regent Street was designed as an elegant, modern thoroughfare running from Carlton House in the south to Regents Park in the north. Built over an existing urban fabric which incorporated most of Swallow Street, its construction involved compulsory purchase, the demolition of 741 houses and the displacement of many tradespeople working in the area.² Nash made no secret about his desire to ‘provide a boundary and complete separation between streets and squares occupied by the nobility and gentry, and the narrow streets and meaner Houses occupied by the mechanics and the trading parts of the community.’³ Yet despite performing the role of a physical barrier between west and east, Regent Street continued to bear traces of its cultural and social past long after its creation. By the 1880s a woman might feel confident enough to shop alone in one of the new department stores, yet she could also be mistaken for a prostitute if she spent too much time looking in shop windows.⁴ The tension between propriety and corruption lingered and this provided the street with its particular character.

It was here, on this lively street with its eclectic community, that the New Gallery opened its doors on 8 May 1888. At a time when the majority of commercial galleries were based on Bond Street, this location marked the New Gallery as diverse and distinctive from the outset.⁵ The interior layout and design confirmed this observation.

¹ Although the Colonnade was removed in 1848, it remained a draw for prostitutes, drunks and reprobates.

² Minutes of New Street Commissioners Meetings, 20 July 1813 – 31 July 1815, CRES 26/1, folio 22, National Archives.

³ Report from Select Committee on Office of Works, 1828, quoted in John Summerson, *The Life and Work of John Nash, Architect* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1980), 77.

⁴ The wrongful arrest of Elizabeth Cass in 1887 will be addressed in Chapter One.

⁵ See Pamela Fletcher and David Israel, *London Gallery Project, 2007*; revised September 2012, accessed 12 April 2023, <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/fletcher/london-gallery/>. Also Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich, with David Israel and Seth Erickson, ‘Local/Global: Mapping Nineteenth-Century London’s Art

Described as an ‘Aladdin’s Palace’ and furnished with ‘costly marbles, sumptuous decoration, stained glass [and] seductive colouring,’ the gallery spaces were highly unusual in being largely at ground-floor level and covering a vast area of approximately one quarter of an acre.⁶ The site incorporated numbers 121 and 121A and was positioned on the west side of Regent Street in the centre of a section between Vigo and Heddon Streets which ran from number 115 to number 131; today it is occupied by the Burberry flagship store. From 1824 to 1868 the site was run by Robert Newman and family as a thriving livery yard and post house, while from 1879 to 1881 it functioned as a provisions market, after which the space lay derelict.⁷

The derelict space was transformed under the direction of the New Gallery’s founders, Charles Emile Hallé (1846 – 1919) and Joseph Comyns Carr (1849 – 1916), with the expertise of Edward Robert Robson (1836-1917) as architect. The gallery operated for twenty-two years until its closure in February 1910, during which time a remarkable seventy-eight exhibitions were staged in the gallery spaces: twenty-two summer exhibitions, fourteen winter and two autumn exhibitions and, additionally, a number of shows which were organised by artists’ societies. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society was the first external group to lease the premises for their inaugural exhibition in the autumn of 1888 and the Society held an additional seven shows at the venue between 1889 and 1910. The Society of Portrait Painters, the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers and the Royal Photographic Society also used the spaces for a further thirty-one exhibitions, while in a hitherto unprecedented move, an American commercial corporation, the Eastman Kodak Company, hired the premises for three weeks in 1897 as part of a major marketing campaign thinly disguised as an art exhibition.

Market,’ *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* Vol. 11, no. 3 (Autumn 2012), accessed 16 June 2023, <https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn12/fletcher-helmreich-mapping-the-london-art-market>.

⁶ ‘The New Gallery,’ *Daily News*, 28 April 1888, 5; ‘The New Gallery,’ *Observer*, 6 May 1888, 3.

⁷ The lease covered number 121 on Regent Street, together with 121a which constituted the mews behind the façade. However, I shall refer to the site as being at number 121 only for the purposes of the thesis. The numbering on old records can be misleading.

What is equally astonishing is that the New Gallery has not previously been the subject of scholarly research, reasons for which will be discussed in due course. This thesis, therefore, marks the first in-depth study of the gallery and brings together a mass of archival research, much of it not seen since its creation and certainly not examined in relation to the New Gallery and its activities as a major exhibition venue bridging the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. The archival material includes old maps and plans of the area dating back to the sixteenth century, fire insurance documents, images from the *Illustrated London News* and Robson's plans for remodelling and refunctioning the site in 1888. In addition, the thesis assembles photographs of the exterior and its interior spaces. Particularly valuable are installation photographs from exhibitions which have been sourced from a variety of archives around Britain, the United States and France. These comprise a selection of Bedford Lemere and Company photographs taken between 1888 and 1890, photographs of the Fifth Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society Exhibition in 1896 taken by Emery Walker, several images of the Eastman Kodak Exhibition of 1897 from Rochester, New York and the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford, a series of installation pictures from the Edward Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition of 1898/9 and two photographs from the International Society Exhibition of 1904, now held at the Musée Rodin, Paris.⁸

Meticulous analysis of these images, together with a thorough examination of an extensive selection of contemporary newspaper reviews and journal articles, exhibition catalogues and letters from artists and exhibition organisers, has facilitated the reconstruction of a clear picture of the gallery's physical spaces and décor, of how pictures and objects were displayed and the ways in which visitors responded to them. While stock books and sales records may be missing, the material previously hidden in obscure and seemingly unrelated archives in fact provides a wealth of material with which to build a depiction of this notable gallery. The challenge, however, to source and assess this data has clearly hindered previous scholarship as there is a significant scarcity of secondary material on the New Gallery.

⁸ For a full listing of archives see the Bibliography.

In addition, there appears to have been an assumption, which this thesis will challenge, that the New Gallery contributed little, or nothing, to the development of the art world during this period. In particular that the New Gallery was merely a continuation of the Grosvenor Gallery in Bond Street which had been established by Sir Coutts Lindsay and Lady Blanche Lindsay in 1877 and where Hallé and Comyns Carr had formerly worked together as Directors.⁹ The Grosvenor Gallery has been the subject of recent scholarship, particularly the comprehensive work of Colleen Denney, Susan Casteras and Julie Codell, while Christopher Newall's earlier work charts the rise and fall of the Grosvenor and includes an invaluable index of exhibitors.¹⁰ Denney, with good reason, identifies the innovative selection and display measures introduced by Coutts Lindsay, as well as the Grosvenor's support of those artists marginalised by the Royal Academy, whether on the grounds of gender, or the result of genre or medium of the work. However, by 1887 a disagreement between Sir Coutts Lindsay and his two Directors resulted in Hallé and Comyns Carr quitting their roles at the Grosvenor – which folded in 1890 - and establishing the New Gallery the following year.¹¹

Where to Exhibit?

Both the New Gallery and the Grosvenor, as well as other galleries established slightly later including the Grafton (1893) and Carfax (1899), were set up largely to provide exhibition venues for those artists who were unsuccessful in petitioning for a place at the prestigious Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. The RA, which was founded in 1768 and based at Burlington House, Piccadilly, from 1868, had been regarded as a significant way for an artist to establish and further their reputation. But the RA reached a crisis point in the later nineteenth century with much criticism being levied regarding the selection process and the way the pictures were displayed.

⁹ The Grosvenor Gallery operated from 1877 until 1890 and was based at 135-137 New Bond Street.

¹⁰ Susan Casteras and Colleen Denney, eds., *The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). Colleen Denney, *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery* (Teaneck: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000). Julie Codell, 'On the Grosvenor Gallery, 1877,' *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*, edited by Dino Franco Felluga, accessed 3 March 2023 https://branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=julie-codell-on-the-grosvenor-gallery-1877. Christopher Newall, *The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibitions: Change and Continuity in the Victorian Art World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹¹ This will be detailed and analysed in Chapter One.

As an institution the RA had a complex relationship with artists, the commercial art market and the public. Although it had been granted a charter by King George III and received some indirect state support through the use of government-owned buildings at a reduced rent, the RA was not directly funded by the state. However, its perceived recognition by King and state meant that the merit of being an Academician, or in having a work on display at the annual Summer Exhibition, was invaluable. The Exhibition provided an opportunity for artists to gain publicity and to sell their work, although nothing was obviously for sale at the event itself. Additionally, the Academicians set a standard and ideal with which to instruct the public by providing a 'grandiose...stage [on which] the Academicians could confidently project themselves as dignified and disinterested arbiters in taste... [and] to show pictures of such elevated intellectual ambition as to transcend the particular circumstances of their production.'¹²

The difficulties of the Royal Academy during this period have been well documented.¹³ Criticism was levied at both the selection jury as well as the hanging committee. There was an enormous number of works submitted for selection, reaching a peak of 12,408 in 1896, from which around ten percent were selected.¹⁴ Artists complained about the 'privileged status of oil painting,' as well as discrimination against smaller genre paintings and women contributors.¹⁵ Once selected, however, the problems perpetuated, as 'artworks by the hundreds were jammed together on high walls.'¹⁶ Many paintings hung too high or too low to be viewed at all and, in addition, the juxtaposition of pictures in an apparently random fashion meant that artworks were frequently not seen at their best. (Figure 1) At all three RA locations there were opportunities for hanging pictures out of sight, either 'among the gathering cobwebs at

¹² Anne Helmreich, 'The Art Market and the Spaces of Sociability in Victorian London,' *Victorian Studies* Vol. 59, no. 3 (Spring 2017): 436-439.

¹³ See, for example, Gordon Fyfe, *Art, Power and Modernity: English Art Institutions, 1750-1950* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Sidney C. Hutchison, *The History of the Royal Academy 1768-1986* (London: Robert Royce, 1986), 123.

¹⁵ Julie F. Codell, 'Artists' Professional Societies: Production, Consumption, and Aesthetics,' in *Towards a Modern Art World*, edited by Brian Allen (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995), 171.

¹⁶ Codell, 'On the Grosvenor Gallery.'

the ceiling or through the dust about your feet.’¹⁷ A particularly unfortunate fate awaited those ill-fated artists relegated to the Octagon Room at Trafalgar Square, which the critics nicknamed ‘a villainous hole’ and the ‘lumber room.’¹⁸ The *Art Journal* voiced the opinion of many critics in describing the plight of the young artist on opening day, unsure as to where his picture had been hung. When found at last, it was ‘courting obscurity in some secluded nook, - and by the public never discovered at all.’¹⁹

It was not just unknown or upcoming artists whose pictures might be displayed poorly or obscurely. In 1893 the hang of John William Waterhouse’s (1849-1917) *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* was severely criticized by the *Magazine of Art* who complained that ‘it could neither be properly seen nor appreciated, owing to the unfortunate hanging of which it was victim.’²⁰ Waterhouse by this stage had been an Associate Academician since 1885 and had been nominated twice for full Academician, whilst a number of his paintings had been bought either for the nation or for national galleries abroad, yet this seemed to carry little weight. His painting hung with other oils in Room III, the largest space for display. This was the year when critics were concerned that British art had grown stagnant, with one writer declaring that ‘The greatest of our living artists have not produced any works of historic or commanding value.’²¹ Sean Robert Willcock, writing the entry for 1893 in the *Royal Academy Summer Exhibition Chronicle*, stresses that it was John Singer Sargent’s painting of *Lady Agnew* which drew the most positive reviews.²²

Both the press and individual artists played a vital role in criticising the Royal Academy. A particularly bitter attack came from the landscape painter, W.J. Laidlay (1846-1912) who, in 1898 produced a booklet entitled *The Royal Academy: Its uses and abuses*.²³

¹⁷ ‘The Royal Academy,’ *Art Journal* (June 1845): 179. The three Academy locations referred to were Somerset House (1779-1837), Trafalgar Square (1837-1868) and Burlington House (1868 to present).

¹⁸ ‘Royal Academy – No. IX,’ *Morning Post*, 29 May 1843, 5. ‘The Exhibition of the Royal Academy,’ *Illustrated London News*, 6 May 1848, 299.

¹⁹ ‘The Royal Academy,’ *Art Journal* (September 1856): 261.

²⁰ ‘La Belle Dame Sans Merci,’ *Magazine of Art* (January 1894): 118.

²¹ ‘Royal Academy of Arts, Summer Exhibition, First Notice,’ *Aberdeen Journal*, 29 April 1893, 5.

²² Sean Robert Willcock, ‘1893: The French Connection,’ *The Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition: A Chronicle, 1769-2018*, edited by Mark Hallett, Sarah Victoria Turner and Jessica Feather (London: Paul Mellon Centre, 2018), accessed 19 November 2022, <https://chronicle250.com/1893>.

²³ William James Laidlay, *The Royal Academy: Its uses and Abuses* (London: Simpkin Marshall, 1898).

Included in the booklet was a criticism of Academicians who 'manage the affairs of the Academy for their own interest and advancement to the neglect and discouragement of national art.'²⁴ Laidlay continued by blaming the RA for 'the gradual destruction of that spirit of independence amongst artists' and the deliberate resolve to 'receive and reward popular rather than artistic work.'²⁵ In this last point he was condemning both the selection and hanging process.

Artists had several options if the RA consistently rejected their work: a dealer could sell on their behalf; a smaller, private gallery might offer exhibition opportunities; or one of the many artists' societies could provide year-round opportunities to show work in a variety of venues. These societies were to prove crucial to the success of the New Gallery and assist its transition from showing late Victorian art to the art of the Edwardian era. Julie Codell's excellent essay highlights a number of ways in which these societies operated in a new and different way to the traditional rules that governed the RA.²⁶ The audience was specifically targeted, the exhibition season extended to encompass the calendar year and there was an attitude of encouragement towards the inclusion of non-British artists.²⁷ Societies often fostered specialism, such as the two watercolour societies founded in 1804 and 1832, or the Society of Engravers, founded in 1802. Others were created with the sole intention of providing opportunities for women, for instance the Society of Female Artists, founded around 1855. Artists frequently joined a range of organisations in order to exhibit as widely as possible. John Lavery (1856-1941), for example, was a member of at least seven societies in Britain and a number around Europe.²⁸ Academicians were not allowed to join other societies until the 1880s, and after that date there were examples of societies, such as the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, which continued to refuse entry to members of the RA.

²⁴ Laidlay, *Royal Academy*.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Codell, 'Artists' Professional Societies.'

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ John Lavery was elected A.R.A. in 1921 and R.A. in 1932. He held membership of New England Art Club, Society of British Artists, Royal Hibernian Academy, Aberdeen Artists' Society and International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers.

Despite the objective of offering an alternative to the RA, societies and independent galleries often replicated the RA's organisational structures and practices and used the already existing networks of critics, dealers and the press. As Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich point out in their wide-ranging volume, the RA also acted as a focal point for dealers, commercial ventures, print makers and framers who shifted their premises to Bond Street and its environs when the RA relocated to Burlington House in 1868.²⁹ However, there were marked differences in display and presentation in some of the newer exhibition venues with a strategy of blurring the boundaries between commerce and private domestic space, as exemplified by the Grosvenor Gallery. In a further example, in 1881 Marcus Bourne Huish, first Managing Director of the Fine Art Society, commissioned the architect Edward William Godwin to redesign the street entry of the Society's premises at 148 New Bond Street to 'make it rather less of a shop front.'³⁰ In 1888 the interiors were redesigned to present 'a domestic environment in which the society's upper-class clients would have been completely at ease.'³¹ It is worth considering the New Gallery's interior and entrance in the light of these late-Victorian pre-occupations with design and these will be fully investigated in the opening chapter.

Throughout the period artists also began to use their studios as sales rooms. An artist's studio was a site, not only of creativity and viewing, but also a place where the artist could control both the environment and the way in which their artworks should be seen. The critic Frederick George Stephens (1827-1907) published *Artists at Home* in 1884, a series of twenty-five photogravures of artists with brief biographies attached.³² Those artists selected included Frederic Leighton, George Frederic Watts, John Everett Millais and Lawrence Alma-Tadema and all were carefully staged to present a particular image. (Figure 2) Watts went one step further in creating both a studio and public art gallery at his Little Holland House, the latter providing a 'rare spectacle,' a formal

²⁹ Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich, eds., *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London, 1850-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

³⁰ Hilarie Faberman, "'Best Shop in London": The Fine Art Society and the Victorian Art Scene,' in *The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England*, edited by Susan Casteras and Colleen Denney (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 149.

³¹ Faberman, "best shop in London," 150.

³² Frederick George Stephens, *Artists at Home* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1884).

display of work for the public, over which he had total control.³³ A studio also provided a locus for critics and journalists to preview an artist's work in progress. Waterhouse, for example, was visited by the *Pall Mall Gazette* in both 1890 and 1891 whilst working on *Ulysses and the Sirens*, which was originally intended for the 1890 Summer Exhibition at the RA. The journalist reported that 'he has not been able to get it finished' and confirmed that Waterhouse was planning further visits to Italy to complete the work.³⁴ This insight into how a studio might operate as a site of display and sales demonstrates the ways in which artists created opportunities alongside and in addition to exhibiting at the RA. Waterhouse was one of several artists, others being Leighton and Alma-Tadema, who sought a broad range of locations to show their work, while continuing to exhibit at the RA.

Literature Review

The nature of this thesis, with four distinct case studies on specific exhibitions or exhibition societies, means that the scholarship relating directly to the case studies is addressed within those chapters. This section analyses the way the New Gallery is presented (or not) in current scholarship and questions why there is a lack of secondary material relating to the gallery. Furthermore, I will challenge the dominant opinion posited by those scholars whose work is addressed below – that the New Gallery was set up in opposition to the RA – and position the gallery, instead, as one which broadened exhibition opportunities for artists and extended the viewing public to reach new buyers.

The subject of museum and exhibition selection and display has become of increasing interest to art historians in recent years, with a range of publications examining the development of the art exhibition from the eighteenth century to the present day. David Solkin's *Art on the Line* provides an extensive analysis of the RA Summer Exhibitions held at Somerset House, which, although preceding the New Gallery by a

³³ Barbara Bryant, *G.F. Watts in Kensington: Little Holland House and Gallery* (Compton, Surrey: Watts Gallery, 2009), 9.

³⁴ 'Mr. J.W. Waterhouse, A.R.A.,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 16 April 1890, 1.

century, nevertheless offers extremely useful material about the earlier days of holding a major exhibition.³⁵ Reesa Greenburg, Bruce Ferguson and Sandy Nairne's volume of twenty-seven essays entitled *Thinking About Exhibitions* covers a broad range of examples, both topically and geographically, although they are all from the twentieth century.³⁶ They argue that exhibitions worked as a way of establishing recognition of an artist, claiming that exhibitions 'are the primary site of exchange in the political economy of art, where signification is constructed, maintained, and occasionally deconstructed. Part spectacle, part socio-historical event, part structuring device.'³⁷ There is a useful final essay, which perhaps would have been more obviously placed at the beginning of the volume, 'What's important about the History of Modern Art Exhibitions?' which gives a summary of exhibition history to date.

Victoria Newhouse, in *Art and the Power of Placement*, provides an excellent overview followed by three detailed, insightful studies, of the effects of placing pictures and objects in different locations.³⁸ In her opening and final chapters she discusses the broad topic of modes of display and offers ways for today's visitor to a gallery to be alert to lighting, wall size, colour and space. These particular considerations are, similarly, investigated by Charlotte Klonk in *Spaces of Experience*, a volume in which she examines the effects of colour, lighting, placement, visitor movement and experience with the aim of understanding 'the emergence of the white cube and its dominance in the twentieth century.'³⁹

A brief survey of select publications which refer to the art world between 1888 and 1910, particularly to exhibitions and the art market, reveal either no mention of the New Gallery or merely a passing mention, often with reference to an art work that was exhibited in the spaces. A number of these publications do, however, comment on the

³⁵ David H. Solkin, ed., *Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions at Somerset House 1780-1836* (London: Paul Mellon Centre, 2001).

³⁶ Reesa Greenburg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne eds., *Thinking about Exhibitions* (London: Routledge, 1996).

³⁷ Greenburg, Ferguson and Nairne, *Exhibitions*, 2.

³⁸ Victoria Newhouse, *Art and the Power of Placement* (New York: Montacelli Press, 2005).

³⁹ Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

workings of the Grosvenor Gallery, undoubtedly the result of research already undertaken by Christopher Newall, Coleen Denney and Susan Casteras.⁴⁰ Other books which contain a passing mention of the New Gallery, usually within a single sentence, include *The Development of the Art Market*, edited by John R. Bayer and Thomas M. Page, Stephen Wildman's *Edward Burne-Jones, Victorian Dreamer* and Gordon Fyfe's *Art Power and Modernity*. This last publication provides an example of a reference to the New Gallery as one of several spaces 'established as an alternative to the Royal Academy,' and where also the Grosvenor and Grafton Galleries are included.⁴¹

Andrew Stephenson's chapter 'Edwardian Cosmopolitanism, ca. 1901-1912' in *The Edwardian Sense*, has a subsection of five pages on the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, who began exhibiting at the New Gallery in 1904. Although he correctly reports that the Whistler Memorial Exhibition (organised by the International Society) was held at the New Gallery, Stephenson gives the incorrect date of 1904.⁴² The book also contains a valuable – for research purposes - photograph of Rodin with some of the International Society council members surrounding his monumental sculpture of *Le Grand Penseur* in 1904 in the spaces of the New Gallery. This is one of the only surviving installation images of any of the exhibitions organised by the International Society at the New Gallery and therefore critical in furthering an understanding of content and modes of display at the venue. Yet Stephenson neglects to include the fact that this photograph shows the Central Hall of the New Gallery and, indeed, fails to refer to the New Gallery in connection to this image at all.

A larger number of publications report inaccurate or incomplete information about the New Gallery which is confusing and therefore misleading. Details about the exact location, the dates of operation and the previous history of the site are regularly

⁴⁰ In addition to the publications listed in footnote 11, see David Peters Corbett and Lara Perry, eds., *English Art 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), Elizabeth Prettejohn, ed., *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art & Aestheticism in Victorian England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), Paul Barlow and Colin Trodd, eds., *Governing Cultures* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) and Morna O'Neill, *Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting and Politics, 1875-1890* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

⁴¹ Fyfe, *Art, Power & Modernity*, 68.

⁴² The Whistler Memorial Exhibition took place at the New Gallery from 22 February until April 1905. An earlier Memorial Exhibition had been held at Copley Hall, Boston, in 1904.

muddled, with the result that erroneous assumptions are made about these important facts. Hermione Hobhouse's *A History of Regent Street*, for example, which contains much excellent research and many useful references, provides the wrong date and excludes some vital information. She incorporates John Tallis's drawings of London but includes her own commentary.⁴³ (Figure 3) Beneath the section that depicts 121 Regent Street the text reads:

Newman's Livery stables were at No. 121 on the west side and in the mews behind. Newman was the only surviving livery stable-keeper of Swallow Street, and he remained there as job master until the 1890s and the stables were then replaced by the New Gallery.⁴⁴

There are a number of issues with this extract. Robert Newman died in 1863 at which point the stables passed to his son, Charles, who died five years later in 1868. By 1879, the Army and Navy Cooperative Society had established a provisions market on the site, and from 1881 the spaces lay derelict until the lease was acquired by Hallé and Comyns Carr.

Fiona MacCarthy, in her publication *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination*, includes some colourful information about the New Gallery but, once again, the details are confused:

It had originally been a fruit market, granted by the Crown to a job-master named Newman...It had later been used as a metropolitan meat market.⁴⁵

The fruit market and meat market were, in fact, one and the same, operating from 1879 to 1881 under the management of the Army and Navy Cooperative Society.

⁴³ John Tallis, *London Street Views, 1838-1840* (London: London Topographical Society, 2002 [1847]).

⁴⁴ Hermione Hobhouse, *A History of Regent Street* (London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1975), 65.

⁴⁵ Fiona MacCarthy, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 374.

Robert Newman had built the yard in 1823/4 on the same site on which he had run his previous livery yard, Sadler's Arms Yard, on the old Swallow Street.

There is also a misperception about the dates of operation. Paula Gillett, for example, writes that 'The career of the New Gallery ended in 1898 with the death of Burne-Jones,' and references Comyn Carr's book, *Eminent Victorians*, as her source.⁴⁶ This statement suggests that the New Gallery closed in 1898, when in reality it ran for a further fourteen years. Comyn Carr's comment about the death of Burne-Jones that 'when he died I think we both felt that a part of our mission had gone,' clearly refers to the end of an era that came with Burne-Jones's death, rather than the end of the Gallery.⁴⁷ Julie Codell, in her essay in *Towards a Modern Art World*, states that 'generally the New Gallery prospered... in its short life,' again implying that the Gallery operated only for a short time.⁴⁸ Yet the Gallery was open for twenty-two years, nine years longer than the Grosvenor, which has, in comparison, received considerable scholarly attention.

Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich overlook the New Gallery within the body of their volume on *The London Art Market*, but there is an entry for the Gallery in the Glossary.⁴⁹ However, the mention is brief and alludes to only a fraction of the Gallery's undertakings and achievements, suggesting that New Gallery 'organised its exhibitions around an annual summer exhibition of contemporary art and a winter exhibition featuring older work, including a Stuart exhibition in 1889.'⁵⁰ This statement provides merely a glimpse of the seventy-eight exhibitions, the Societies involved and the diversity of the winter exhibition season.

Finally, Simon Goldhill, in Chapter One of *Victorian Culture and Classical Antiquity*, makes the point (incorrectly) that 'Waterhouse's *Circe* was first exhibited in 1891 by

⁴⁶ Paula Gillett, *Worlds of Art: Painters in Victorian Society* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1934), 240.

⁴⁷ J. Comyn Carr, *Some Eminent Victorians: Personal Reflections in the World of Art and Letters* (London: Duckworth, 1908), 132.

⁴⁸ Codell, 'Artists' Professional Societies,' 177.

⁴⁹ Fletcher and Helmreich, *Modern Art Market*, Glossary.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 309.

choice at the Grosvenor Gallery rather than the Royal Academy – a more intimate and challenging space, which chose self-consciously more provocative art than the Academy.⁵¹ Not only had the Grosvenor Gallery closed down by 1891, but it was at the New Gallery that Waterhouse exhibited *Circe*, at the same time as exhibiting *Ulysses and the Sirens* at the Royal Academy.

The lack of stockbooks from the New Gallery, together with an absence of letters or diaries belonging to Hallé or Comyns Carr, has clearly impacted scholarship to date relating to the gallery. Hobhouse, whose work dates to 1975, has been used by later authors to provide dates and other data, yet, as has been demonstrated above, this information lacks accuracy and depth. The data collected for this thesis from newspaper and journal reviews, photographs of exhibitions, exhibition catalogues and additional archive material specific to the case studies, has been carefully examined and interpreted to provide a more precise and complete picture of the New Gallery's place at the fin de siècle and as a unique exhibition venue.,

Rather than being perceived as an 'offshoot' of the Grosvenor Gallery, which stood in firm opposition to the RA, I want to propose that the New Gallery worked to broaden the exhibition opportunities for artists in conjunction with the RA, by providing a wider audience and new potential buyers.⁵² To illustrate this point, the choices of John William Waterhouse are examined to reveal how he selected different venues for two paintings of the same subject in 1891. Waterhouse, like Leighton, Watts and Tadema, was one of a group of Academicians (and Associate Academicians) who utilised a multitude of venues for their work. In 1891 Waterhouse exhibited two contrasting representations of the Odysseus myth: at the RA, his *Ulysses and the Sirens* fulfilled all the requirements of a history painting, recognised as the most prestigious in the hierarchy of genres. A large action picture, full of figures, it catches the moment that Ulysses escapes the Sirens' song and incorporates a series of strong diagonals to emphasize the dramatic movement. His submission to the New Gallery, *Circe Offering*

⁵¹ Simon Goldhill, *Victorian Culture and Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 57.

⁵² Codell, 'Artists's Professional Societies,' 9.

the Cup to Ulysses, presents a sensuous, powerful sorceress who dominates the picture frame. Her naked female body is evident beneath the chiffon-like fabric, and the protagonist, like the viewer, shrinks below her Amazonian form.

With two prestigious venues available, Waterhouse successfully exhibited his contrasting paintings in the early summer of 1891. The New Gallery not only provided an additional location for display, but also a new buyer for Waterhouse: Charles E. Lees, a prominent Oldham industrialist and art collector.⁵³ This example indicates the way in which the New Gallery operated to extend opportunities for artists, how it offered a fresh experience for viewers, artists and buyers. The thesis repositions the existing narrative of display and reception at the fin de siècle to include exhibitions at the New Gallery within the existing canon.

A New Outlook

The blurring of lines between the two galleries has, no doubt, contributed to the lack of recognition of the New Gallery as a significant, unique exhibition space during the fin-de-siècle period in London. This thesis posits the New Gallery as a forward-thinking, innovative venue which intersected with many aspects of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century cultural, artistic and social life and which helped to shape the history of exhibiting both in London and beyond. It cannot be denied that Hallé and Comyns Carr continued a number of traditions established at the Grosvenor from the time of the first Summer Exhibition in April 1888, when the three most prominent artists from the Grosvenor (Burne-Jones, Watts and Alma-Tadema) chose to leave that establishment in order to ally themselves with the New Gallery. With unchanged Directors, a number of the same exhibiting artists and a similar approach to displaying artworks, it is unsurprising that some of the public and press perceived the one as a continuation of the other.

⁵³ Waterhouse sold three other paintings directly from Summer Exhibitions at the New Gallery: 1894, *Ophelia* was bought by George McCulloch; 1897, *Mariana in the South* was bought by Alexander Henderson; 1898, *Juliet* was bought by Frederick Fry.

But the records suggest something else. An in-depth analysis of archival material illustrates how the New Gallery developed well beyond the Grosvenor in terms of both exhibition content and display techniques. The Gallery quickly established itself as a place which showcased avant-garde, new and exciting art forms, as demonstrated with their immediate support of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, established in 1887 and which held its inaugural show in the spaces in the autumn of 1888. Furthermore, the New Gallery endorsed photography as an art form worthy of being presented as high art, with the Eastman Kodak Exhibition in 1897 and ten exhibitions organised by the Royal Photographic Society from 1900 to 1909.

Although the Summer Exhibitions continued the Grosvenor tradition of showcasing contemporary art and included sculpture and drawings, as well as oils and watercolours, the Winter season provided the opportunity to present exhibitions with a strong educational slant. The Directors were responsible for a total of fourteen Winter shows from 1888 to 1901/2, bringing in additional expertise to serve on the organising committees. George Scharf, for example, Director of the National Portrait Gallery, was instrumental in helping to organise loans for the Tudor and Stuart Exhibitions held in 1889/90 and 1890/91, while the committee for the Venetian Exhibition of 1894/5 comprised ninety-two individuals, including James Paton, the curator of the Glasgow Art Galleries and Isidore Spielmann.⁵⁴ The eighteen members of the Executive Committee for the Venetian Exhibition included two women: Hallé's sister, Elinor, and Una Ashworth Taylor, who were responsible for selecting and cataloguing lace and embroideries.⁵⁵ The individuals on the committees added specialist knowledge and served to raise the profile of a particular exhibition through their own collections, their status and their contacts.

The first four Winter exhibitions were devoted to Royal Houses of Britain: Stuart, Tudor, Guelph and Victorian and included both contemporary and much earlier artworks, paintings and objects, which were intended to reveal to the public a variety of works

⁵⁴ *Exhibition of Venetian Art: The New Gallery* (London: Richard Clay, 1894).

⁵⁵ *Exhibition of Venetian Art*, v – vi.

‘which played so great a part in the history of this country.’⁵⁶ The Tudor and Stuart exhibitions were exceptionally successful, with high attendance records.⁵⁷ Hallé, reflecting on their success in his autobiography, questioned what attracted people to these exhibitions. His rather cynical conclusion was that ‘real interest in a subject is entertained by comparatively few people; what attracts them is curiosity, especially morbid curiosity.’⁵⁸ This was certainly borne out by the comments in the press which focussed on individual relics in the Stuart Exhibition including one of the shirts Charles I had worn to his beheading, a lock of hair of Mary Queen of Scots and a cuff of one of Lord Darnley’s gloves.

The above exhibitions were followed by five shows which focussed on a particular centre of art: Early Italian (1893/4), Venetian (1894/5), Spanish (1895/6), British and Continental (1897/8), and Flemish and British (1899/1900). These brought together some extraordinary works which had not previously been seen in Britain and also prompted a number of debates about attribution, thus acting as a catalyst to increased dialogue and scholarship, as well as new publications. One of the riskiest ventures was the Spanish Exhibition of 1895/1896, the first major show of Spanish art in England, and one which is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five. The British public was not particularly familiar with Spanish art although the exhibition did coincide with a new publication on Velasquez and his oeuvre, *The Art of Velazquez* by R.A.M. Stevenson. A particularly heated debate arose regarding the attribution of the painting of *Jael and Sisera* loaned to the exhibition by John C. Robinson (1824-1913) curator of the South Kensington Museum earlier in the century and a collector of Spanish art. (Figure 4) The catalogue entry for the painting states that it ‘is believed to have been painted by Velazquez in 1623 [and] bears a monogrammatic or abbreviated signature in the right hand lower corner.’⁵⁹ The attribution was contested by several other leading authorities and a lively debate continued in the press for several weeks. The painting is now in the

⁵⁶ *Exhibition of the Royal House of Stuart: The New Gallery* (London: Richard Clay, 1888). The House of Hanover was a cadet branch of the House of Guelph, also known as Welf.

⁵⁷ C.E. Hallé, *Notes from a Painter’s Life* (London: J. Murray, 1909), 166.

⁵⁸ Hallé, *Notes*, 170.

⁵⁹ *Exhibition of Spanish Art under the Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen Regent of Spain: The New Gallery* (London: Richard Clay, 1895), 4.

National Gallery of Ireland and is firmly ascribed to Pedro Nunez delle Valle (1590/4-1649) whose partial signature has been uncovered, after cleaning, on the bottom right of the canvas. The exhibition not only furthered the study of Spanish art but also aroused intrigue and discussion which served to expand knowledge.

But it was the presence of El Greco paintings at the Spanish Exhibition which was most radical. Although there had been a revival of interest in his works in France, El Greco was hardly known in England and certainly less understood. There were seven works by El Greco on display at the New Gallery, three in the West Room, four in the North and a sketch of Philip II on the Balcony. Four of the works were loaned by two brothers, Archibald and John, whose father, Sir William Stirling-Maxwell (1818-1878) had written the first monograph on Velazquez in 1855 and who had built up an early collection of Spanish art. Three further works were owned by John Singer Sargent, Sir Francis Cook and Pedro de Madrazo, whose *The Holy Family* was described in the catalogue to the exhibition as 'painted in the artist's latest style.'⁶⁰ Reviews of the exhibition were dominated by observations on the work of Velasquez, Murillo and Goya, with the *Leeds Mercury*, *Bristol Mercury* and *Glasgow Herald* excluding all mention of El Greco. The *Pall Mall Gazette* was more openly critical, referring to 'the two strange bluish Grecos' as well as the 'weird oppositions of colour' in *St. Martin*.⁶¹ It was not until 1913, when Roger Fry and Clive Bell lauded El Greco as a precursor to Modern Art in articles in the *Burlington Magazine*, that El Greco's works were viewed more positively by the wider public. However, it should be remembered that it was on the walls of the New Gallery that his work was presented to the British public en masse for the first time.

In between the exhibitions of Royal Houses and centres of art, the Directors organised two major retrospectives and one memorial exhibition. In the winter of 1892/3 a retrospective of the works of Burne-Jones was held at the New Gallery and four years later, in 1896/7, the gallery held a similar show for Watts. When Burne-Jones died in June, 1898, the New Gallery was the obvious place for a Memorial exhibition. Opening

⁶⁰ *Exhibition of Spanish Art*, 4.

⁶¹ 'The New Gallery,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 December 1895, 4. 'Spanish Art at the New Gallery,' *Graphic*, 4 January 1896, 20.

in December that year, this was not only one of the earliest memorial exhibitions to be held, but also the quickest one to be organised after the death of a major artist.⁶² A specially-bound book of installation photographs was produced for the exhibition. Fortunately, a copy survives today which provides valuable information about the display of Burne-Jones's work in the gallery spaces.

As remarked upon earlier, the gallery also welcomed new types of art including decorative and industrial art and photography and, in doing so, contributed to the discourse surrounding what constituted high art, whether objects such as books and needlework should be on display in a West End art gallery and whether photography was art or a technical achievement. The contributions of the New Gallery to this highly relevant discourse position it as a pivotal space during the fin de siècle. Other societies which held their exhibitions at the New Gallery include the Society of Portrait Painters and, in the early years of the twentieth century, the New Gallery embraced international art in a more formal way by providing the venue for nine exhibitions organised by the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers. The walls were covered – at various exhibitions - with the work of French Impressionists, including Monet, Degas and Cezanne, Japanese colour prints by Hokusai and others, and paintings by artists as wide-ranging as Goya, Courbet, Augustus John and Charles Ricketts.

In addition, the New Gallery brought together a number of individuals and societies who have, in some cases, been investigated independently, but not within the context of the New Gallery and not in relation to each other. These include George Walton, Walter Crane, John Lavery and James McNeill Whistler. George Walton, for example, exhibited with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and also designed the interiors in the North and West Rooms for the Eastman Kodak Exhibition of 1897, while John Lavery, who knew Walton through the Glasgow Boys group of painters, exhibited at the

⁶² Memorial exhibitions at the Royal Academy prior to 1898: Sir Edwin Landseer (died October 1873) held in winter, 1874; John Linnell (died January 1882) and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (died April 1882), held jointly in winter 1883; Frederic Leighton (died January 1896) held in winter 1897; John Everett Millais (died August 1896) held in winter 1898.

New Gallery with the Society of Portrait Painters, at the Summer Exhibition and with the International Society. Walter Crane, as President of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and a regular exhibitor with that society, also contributed to the Summer Exhibition, for example with *Neptune's Horses* in 1893. And Whistler also exhibited through the Society of Portrait Painters and the International Society. Although a detailed mapping of the networks and relationships is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is worth bearing in mind the number of contemporary artists who were brought together in this one site.

Why were artists' societies attracted to the gallery and its spaces? In 1888 the Grosvenor Gallery was still operating, while other exhibition spaces included the Institute of Watercolours in Piccadilly and the Dudley Gallery in the Egyptian Hall, also in Piccadilly. A study of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and International Society minute books reveals that artist-organisers of both spent considerable time searching to find the appropriate space to suit their aims and to best display the work of their members. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society minutes, for example, note the consideration of several alternative venues including Waterloo House, Cadogan Hall and the Royal Albert Hall, while the International Society held their first two exhibitions at the Princes Skating Rink in Knightsbridge, followed by one at the Institute of Painters.⁶³ It is an important point that after one experience at the New Gallery, these societies remained loyal until its demise in 1910.

Hallé and Comyns Carr must have provided a magnet to artists and artist-led societies as the two men had a track record of successfully organising and running exhibitions and had also built up a network of contacts amongst buyers, dealers and critics. Additionally, Hallé was an artist, albeit not of the same prominence as many of those who exhibited at the Grosvenor and New Galleries, but one for whom sales were vitally important. He stated in his autobiography that, with no private means, the sale of his paintings was crucial; his art had sold well at the Grosvenor and he now needed a new

⁶³ Minutes of Meeting, 12 July 1887, Society of Designer-Craftsmen, AAD/1980/1/40, AAD, Victoria and Albert Museum.

platform to display his works.⁶⁴ Hallé came from a strong artistic background: his father was the renowned pianist and conductor who founded the Hallé Orchestra in 1858 and was a central figure in the musical life of London.

Comyns Carr was a playwright, art critic and theatre manager, married to Alice Laura Vansittart, neé Strettell (1850-1927), the designer of the bold costume that Ellen Terry wore as Lady Macbeth, painted by John Singer Sargent in 1889. Comyns Carr had extensive contacts in France established through his work as London correspondent and editor of the French art journal *L'Art* and therefore had forged a number of links between the French and English art worlds. Between them, Hallé and Comyns Carr had close friends amongst both Academicians, including Frederic Leighton, President of the Royal Academy, and non-Academicians who were searching for a venue to showcase their art, as well as the wider cultural world of the late nineteenth century. The two of them presented a formidable team of expertise, experience and drive.

In addition to the attraction of the two experienced Directors, the location, layout and interior decor of the New Gallery were all factors which contributed to the gallery's immediate and enduring triumph. The proximity to Liberty's, the Café Royal and the Royal Academy cannot be overlooked as crucial to its success. As Erica Rappaport argues, Regent Street 'became the epicenter of the West End shopping district' and pictures were simply one more commodity available for purchase.⁶⁵ She quotes from the French writer, Francis Wey, who suggested that 'Regent Street was the only spot, outside the park, where society people are certain to meet, as smart women never dream of shopping elsewhere.'⁶⁶ From the 1850s onwards Regent Street was a retail destination, but there were distinct differences between Regent Street and its neighbour, Bond Street, which will be explored later in the thesis.

⁶⁴ Hallé, *Notes*, 159.

⁶⁵ Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 9.

⁶⁶ Francis Wey *A Frenchman sees the English in the 50s*, translated by Valerie Pirie (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1935 [1856]), 72.

The arrangement of the interior was radically different to the typical Bond Street gallery, such as Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell Limited at 160 New Bond Street, which consisted of a small room on the ground floor with an exhibition space above. (Figure 5) Originally a livery yard and post house, the re-functioned site at 121 Regent Street was largely on the flat, with low walls and vast overhead roof lights. The structure dated to the rebuilding of Regent Street in the early nineteenth century but the site had a history extending back to the sixteenth century. The exploration and analysis of the spaces and the wider locale forms Chapter One of the thesis in order to give context and history, in addition to an understanding of how the spaces of the New Gallery were shaped by events and activities that had transpired on the site up to this point. The configuration of the New Gallery formed one particular layer which interacted with all prior manifestations of the site.

Methodology

The concept of layers forms a central theme within the thesis with the metaphor of a palimpsest providing a methodology with which to explore and critically analyse layers of architecture, culture and meaning within the spaces. The Oxford English Dictionary gives three definitions for *palimpsest*:

Paper, parchment, or other writing material designed to be reusable after any writing on it has been erased.

A parchment or other writing surface on which the original text has been effaced or partially erased, and then overwritten by another; a manuscript in which later writing has been superimposed on earlier (effaced) writing.

In extended use: a thing likened to such a writing surface, esp. in having been reused or altered while still retaining traces of its earlier form; a multi-layered record.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Oxford English Dictionary, accessed 31 January 2023, <https://www-oedcom.libproxy.york.ac.uk/view/Entry/136319>.

The final definition points to its expanded use as a metaphor which can be used in a range of disciplines. As such it has been adopted by scholars in a number of fields including geography, psychology and literature.⁶⁸ For the purposes of this thesis, the palimpsest will be considered in relation to three additional areas of scholarship: architecture, contemporary site-specific performance and archaeology, using theories proposed by Rodolfo Machado (born 1942, Buenos Aires), Mike Pearson (1949-2022) with Cliff McLucas (1945-2002), and Michael Shanks (born 1959).

The theories of Machado, a practising architect and academic, provide a methodology to investigate and analyse the building, its complex physical and cultural spaces and its location.⁶⁹ His paper 'Old Buildings as Palimpsest,' is particularly useful as it offers an exploration of the metaphor of the palimpsest in relation to the reuse and reconfiguration of architectural structures.⁷⁰ The aim of this paper was to prompt a discussion on remodelling old buildings, previously 'a kind of minor, neglected area' of architectural theory and practice.⁷¹ Furthermore, he encouraged the development of 'a theory of remodelling as a branch of architectural theory' and suggested the metaphor of the palimpsest as a way of defining and exploring the hypothesis.⁷² Using Machado's arguments facilitates an ability to view the spaces as a layered entity with previous structures and history which impacted each temporary exhibition.

The remaining four chapters of the thesis constitute case studies of particular exhibitions and exhibition societies. The case studies have been carefully selected through assessment of available source material, especially installation photographs which have the potential to reveal display schemes, juxtapositions of works and

⁶⁸ See, for example, A. Marvell and David Simm, 'Unravelling the geographical palimpsest through fieldwork,' *Geography* Vol. 101, no. 3 (Autumn 2016): 125-136; Angela Kimyongur and Amy Wigelsworth, eds., *Rewriting Wrongs: French Crime Fiction and the Palimpsest* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

⁶⁹ Rodolfo Machado was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1942 and is a citizen of the United States. He founded Machado Silvetti in 1985 with Jorge Silvetti. It is a leading architecture and urban design firm recognized for creating, revitalizing, and expanding distinctive buildings and spaces in the United States and around the world.

⁷⁰ Rodolfo Machado, 'Old Buildings as Palimpsest,' *Progressive Architecture*, Vol. 11 (1976): 46-49.

⁷¹ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 46.

⁷² Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

additional decorative elements such as lighting or furnishings. The notion of the palimpsest, used to explore and analyse the physical, cultural and social layers of the New Gallery building and locale in the opening chapter, is extended to provide a methodology for the subsequent chapters. The exhibitions are interpreted as further layers of the palimpsest, temporary coverings which altered the space and created new meanings. These include layers of competing narrative, of political message, of visitor response and discourse, as well as references to previous uses of the space. In addition, there are layers of physical alteration to the spaces, of space distortion and physical dressing through changes in wall colour, texture, use of screens and furniture.

Although Machado's exploration of the palimpsest within the field of architecture works well for the analysis of the building and its interior in Chapter One, it is limited in its usefulness for the subsequent chapters. The case studies of Chapters Two to Five involve a critical investigation into the ways in which the interior spaces of the New Gallery were transformed and took on new meanings with each temporary exhibition. The metaphor of the palimpsest remains effective as a methodology for enquiry, but applying the metaphor more widely by moving the concept into additional disciplines, in a way that Mieke Bal refers to as 'travelling concepts,' provides additional vocabulary and tools for analysis.⁷³ Bal argues that a concept is transformed as it moves to another field but that 'the differences and the common elements are equally important.'⁷⁴ The interdisciplinary borrowing of the notion helps to expand and illuminate the multi-temporal life cycle of the spaces.

I would like to suggest expanding the metaphor of the palimpsest, as utilised by Machado, by exploring two additional disciplines which already engage with the concept: site-specific performance and archaeology. These fields of study are brought together in the work of academic, archaeologist and experimental theatre-maker, Mike Pearson, firstly in his collaboration with Cliff McLucas at Brith Gof, a performance theatre in Wales, and secondly through his association with archaeological theorist,

⁷³ Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

⁷⁴ Bal, *Travelling Concepts*, 38.

Michael Shanks.⁷⁵ What follows is a brief introduction to Pearson's theories, together with a clarification as to how and why his theories can be used to extend the methodology of the palimpsest for the purposes of this thesis. I conclude with providing examples from the Stuart Exhibition (1888/9) and an exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society (1902) to demonstrate how these extended theories enhance the argument that temporary exhibitions generate layers of meaning within a site.

Pearson perceives space as a multi-layered entity which is activated through performance.⁷⁶ If a temporary art exhibition is interpreted as a type of performance, then it too should be able to activate the space it fills in ways that Pearson suggests. The symbiotic relationship of performance/exhibition to space creates a fresh meaning for that space and reveals additional ways of interpreting the New Gallery exhibitions.

His collaboration with Cliff McLucas, particularly at Brith Gof from 1981 to 1997, generated a consolidation of theories about the interaction of performance, place and public. Pearson/McLucas argue that performances rely upon:

the complex coexistence, superimposition and interpenetration of a number of architectures and narratives, historical and contemporary, of two basic orders: that which is *of* the site, its fixtures and fittings, and that which is brought *to* the site, the performance and its scenography...⁷⁷

In other words, each of these orders has multiple histories and narratives, and when brought together they form a fresh space which can be interpreted in a new way. Pearson and McLucas use the term 'host' for the pre-existing site and 'ghost' for the dynamic performance that interacts with and alters that site. The host constitutes the physical site with its architectural features, light, interior décor and spaces, but also resonances of previous articulations. At the New Gallery, the 'host' is the site which has

⁷⁵ Mike Pearson held the position of Emeritus Professor at Aberystwyth University until his death in 2022. From 1972 to 1997 he was a professional theatre maker with a number of companies.

⁷⁶ Mike Pearson *Site-Specific Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 34-37.

⁷⁷ Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance*, 35.

been remodelled and re-designed by Edward R. Robson, yet this site also resonates with the time when it was occupied by a livery yard and subsequently by a provisions market. The ghost can be interpreted as the layer created by a temporary exhibition within its spaces:

The host site is haunted for a time by a ghost that the theatre-makers create. Like all ghosts it is transparent and the host can be seen through the ghost. Add into this a third term – the witness, i.e., the audience – and we have a kind of trinity that constitutes the work.⁷⁸

How do these arguments about host, ghost and witness contribute to an analysis of the New Gallery exhibitions? Clearly, an exhibition is not a performance; there are some distinct differences between Pearson's site-specific performances with Brith Gof and an art exhibition. The exhibitions at the New Gallery remained in situ for between three and six weeks, while Pearson's performances lasted for anything from one to four hours. Although theatre sets might be left in situ, the actors vacated the site at the end of each performance and returned for the next one, while at an exhibition the artworks remained in place for the duration of the exhibition. At the New Gallery, the visitors moved through the spaces, often in a pre-designated way, gazing upon static objects, while the opposite was true of most of Brith Gof's performances. And finally, at the art exhibitions, the works were generally silent (with a few exceptions, such as the playing of the harpsichord at an Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society show) while Pearson's theatrical performances in Wales involved sound in the form of speech, music and/or other noises. The sounds at an exhibition at the New Gallery originated, instead, from the visitors, with their conversations, footsteps on the wood floors and rustle of fabric in their clothing.

However, the focus of Pearson's argument is on the temporary transformation of a space through a new occupation of the site. These layered transgressions can be

⁷⁸ Cliff McLucas, 'Ten Feet and Three Quarters of an Inch of Theatre,' quoted in Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* (London: Routledge, 2000), 128.

compared to a palimpsest, where traces of earlier manifestations are evident. Applying Pearson's arguments forces a focus on the dynamic relationship between the performance (or, in the case of the New Gallery, the exhibition) and the pre-existing site. How did the presence of three to four hundred artworks alter the gallery spaces? What could still be seen of the original site, what was highlighted, and why? What meaning emerged from the interaction between objects and space and how might this tell us more about the exhibitions? Equally important is the third element, the 'witness' or audience. Using Pearson's and McLucas's theories on performance ensures that the visitors are not overlooked but instead understood to be integral to the animation of the spaces. The thesis devotes a substantial focus to the analysis of reviews, journal articles and diary entries in order to judge visitor response. Where the performance ignites the space and creates a space of encounter, without the visitor it is not fully activated.

Interpreting one of the exhibitions at the New Gallery through the lens of Pearson's theories gives a focus to the transformative power of the temporary installation. A brief evaluation of the Exhibition of the House of Stuart (30 December 1888 to 16 April 1889) demonstrates ways in which these theories might be applied and the value of approaching an analysis in this way. Pearson argues for a focus on the way in which the physical characteristics of a show (including objects, design, layout, visitor route) activate the spaces to provoke a certain experience, a particular narrative and an emotional engagement for the 'witness.'

What becomes immediately apparent when assessing the traces of the Stuart Exhibition, including reviews, the catalogue and letters to and from George Scharf, is the promotion of Mary Queen of Scots as a figure of sympathy and admiration. This was achieved by means of creating a particular narrative which emerged throughout the display, a sentiment reflected in various press reports labelling her 'the unfortunate Queen' and 'a victim ... of political opponents.'⁷⁹ The prize object in the exhibition was a miniature depicting Mary, which had been lent by Queen Victoria herself. This

⁷⁹ 'The Stuart Exhibition,' *Saturday Review*, 12 January 1889, 39-40.

original work was executed by Janet (Francois Clouet, active by 1536-1572) and was reproduced as an etching to grace the front cover of the exhibition catalogue. (Figure 6) The loan of this particular, precious object appeared to endorse Queen Victoria's sympathy for Mary and encourage a particular emotional engagement with the Scottish queen. Numerous relics, particularly those attached to Mary during her time in captivity in England, were placed in cabinets in the West Gallery where the visitor route commenced.

Timothy Lang's volume, *The Victorians and the Stuart Heritage* (1995), suggests that Mary was often viewed as a female martyr which conformed to the Victorian ideals of motherhood and domesticity, despite Mary being a monarch. Parallels could be drawn between Queen Victoria's domestic life and her widowhood, to that of Mary. The enigma of Mary was explored throughout the Victorian period in verse, song and image, with the publication of *The Queen's Token* by Mrs Cashel Hoey coinciding with the Stuart Exhibition at the New Gallery. According to the *Saturday Review* the book 'has started afresh the discussion as to the secret of the charm that Mary Stuart exercised over her contemporaries.'⁸⁰ The choice of objects and the hierarchy of display, together with the accompanying commentary in the catalogue and press reviews, all served to create a narrative of Mary's passive, feminine martyrdom which evoked an emotional response in the visitors to the exhibition.

Pearson's theories on contemporary performance are linked, in part, to his earlier training as an archaeologist. It is, perhaps, unsurprising that he collaborated with Michael Shanks, an archaeological theorist, on several projects which focus on themes of layers and site activation. On his website Shanks defines his concept of archaeology:

Archaeology is a way of thinking and engaging with things that can offer unique insights into how change and innovation work, into the design of things, into where we have come from and where we might go.

⁸⁰ 'New Books and Reprints,' *Saturday Review*, 12 January 1889, 56.

Archaeology is about encounter, the past-in-the-present, actuality, as it relates to our imagined futures. Archaeology is based upon the past's resistance to decay, its presence, and implying a care for the future. In this archaeology is a mode of memory, of recollection.⁸¹

In his paper on 'The Archaeological Imagination,' Shanks writes about 'imagining past lives experienced through ruins and remains' and describes the task of working with the remains to deliver narratives and reconstruct an account of an episode, a period of history or a specific place in time. He suggests that it is through the close examination of those documents which are discovered on a site or in an archive that judgements can be made and arguments formed about the way a site, people or civilisation operated. At the New Gallery these documents might include art works, catalogues, diaries, reviews and installation photographs. Shanks's arguments encourage investigation into the wider social and cultural experiences of a period of history, an episode or a location.

To illustrate this point, a fragmentary remain such as a photograph can be used to reconstruct evidence of a particular event, while also revealing information about the wider time period. Figure 7 depicts the judging panel for the pictorial section of the exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society in 1902 at the New Gallery. The poses of the five figures appear to be carefully staged around a leather sofa where they are presented as, perhaps, discussing the merits of various entries that might be awarded a prize. Additional historical knowledge means that the figures can be identified: from left William Crooke, William Bland and J.C.S Mummery, with Joseph Gale and Peter H. Emerson seated on the leather sofa. The men are all formally dressed, middle to older in age and form an imposing group.

An analysis of the formal structure of the photograph reveals Gale to be centrally placed within the frame, the other four men creating a triangular shape around him with Mummery at the peak. Four of the figures are engaged in looking at the papers

⁸¹ Michael Shanks, *Archaeology*, accessed 17 September 2022, <https://mshanks.com/archaeology/>.

held by Crooke, while Emerson ponders his own sheaf of papers alone. Knowledge of the layout of the New Gallery verifies that this photograph was taken in the West Room in the southeast corner, next to one of the two open doorways. A number of framed photographs can be seen on the walls stretching from the dado rail up to a height of around eight feet.

Reading the layers of the photograph to look beyond the surface, this image can be used to reconstruct information about the way photographs were displayed in the late nineteenth century, to question why there are no women included in the shot, and to interpret the positioning of the men in relation to each other. The photographs are either mounted and framed with narrow borders or framed with broad structures, all of which are made of dark materials. The Royal Photographic Society began exhibiting at the New Gallery in 1900, making this their third exhibition on the premises. After receiving much criticism from the press in 1900 because ‘the committee found the hanging a difficult problem under novel conditions,’ and citing the ceiling height as particularly testing, the committee reviewed their methods of display and abandoned a geometrical wall composition in favour of a ‘freer arrangement’ so that the eye was ‘not drawn from the pictures to the lines of the frames.’⁸²⁸³ This freer arrangement is in evidence in the photograph and ties in with developments in photographic display that were around at this time.

The juxtaposition of the five men in the image is worth further consideration. It is of note that Emerson appears slightly detached from his four colleagues. During his life Emerson was in conflict with the photography establishment on a number of matters and published controversial books, letters and articles which meant that he was not particularly popular.⁸⁴ Examining the photograph in this way and asking questions about what can be understood beyond the immediate image, leads to an appreciation of the image as representative of wider values and discourse of the period.

⁸² A.C.R. Carter, ‘The Two Great Exhibitions,’ *Photograms of the Year* Vol. 8 (1901): 133.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ ‘Peter Henry Emerson,’ *Luminous Lint*, accessed 23 May 2023, https://luminous-lint.com/app/photographer/peter_henry_emerson/A/.

Chapter Structure

The concept of layers, with particular reference to the palimpsests of performance and archaeology, is central to an analysis of the four case studies. These have been carefully selected based on a number of criteria, fundamental to which are existing installation photographs to give an indication of how the spaces were physically altered during exhibitions. A large number of exhibitions have inevitably been excluded in the research, including the annual Summer shows and a number of the Winter exhibitions. Furthermore, the presence of two societies at the gallery, the Society of Portrait Painters and the Royal Photographic Society, is not thoroughly examined. The minute books in the archives of the Society of Portrait Painters are in the process of being transcribed and to work on them in their current state would have taken, proportionately, too much time to allow research on other topics. Additionally, to date there are no known photographs of their exhibitions at the New Gallery and, therefore, no visual evidence to support arguments and theories about their displays. Having chosen to focus on the Eastman Kodak Exhibition, about which there is a wealth of written and visual documentation, the Royal Photographic Society has been side-lined, although there are a number of references to the discourse surrounding photography during this era in Chapter Three.

The first case study examines the collaboration between the New Gallery and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, from their inaugural exhibition in 1888 to the final show in January, 1910. In addition to nine photographs taken by Emery Walker of the fifth exhibition in 1896, a complete set of the exhibition catalogues is held at the Archive of Art and Design, many of which contain additional essays written by members of the Society.⁸⁵ A number of the exhibitions included a weekly evening lecture series, the transcripts and reviews of which provide additional invaluable material. This wealth of written data is productive in interpreting the social and political messages that were integral to the aims of the Society. The New Gallery spaces were transformed physically

⁸⁵ Society of Designer Craftsmen, AAD, Victoria and Albert Museum.

over the course of the exhibitions, while the objects on display activated the spaces to present theories of equality, both in art and life.

In Chapter Three the focus is on a single exhibition, the Eastman Kodak exhibition of 1897, which is analysed through a number of conflicting viewpoints. Of particular value for this chapter is the George Eastman archive in Rochester, New York.⁸⁶ Eastman was a prolific letter-writer and the bulk of his letters are now available digitally. In addition, five installation photographs reveal the dramatic physical transformation of the spaces undertaken by the Scottish designer, George Walton, the only example of a professional designer being employed to remodel the exhibition spaces. The traces left by this exhibition include substantial written material such as the *Outline of Arrangements* and a comprehensive catalogue, both of which offer further insights into presentation and display, as well as the decisions surrounding the inclusion of photographs sent in by members of the Royal Family. These remains present a series of competing narratives evident at the exhibition: the sales and marketing strategies of the Eastman company, the presence of royalty and the discourse surrounding photography and art.

Chapter Four, likewise, concentrates on one specific exhibition, the Burne-Jones Memorial exhibition of 1898/9, although reference is made to the display of his work at previous summer shows at the New Gallery. A set of installation photographs remains from this exhibition which demonstrates intriguing juxtapositions of works, distortion of space and physical dressing in the use of curtains, plants and seating. An analysis of the images reveals a strong narrative underlying the display of Burne-Jones's work, which resonates with wider religious beliefs at the end of the nineteenth century. Two Memorial exhibitions were staged at the New Gallery, the other being the J.M. Whistler Memorial in February 1905. However, with only one image easily accessible from that exhibition, the choice was to focus on Burne-Jones's Memorial. Burne-Jones was, in addition, a central figure for the success of the New Gallery and his contribution is able

⁸⁶ George Eastman, papers, accessed 9 July 2023, <https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/864>.

to be addressed in the chapter. However, a comparison of the two exhibitions would certainly be a worthwhile project for future researchers.

The final Chapter investigates the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers and serves to bring the thesis firmly into the Edwardian period, as the relationship of the Society with the gallery ran from 1904 to 1910. With only two installation photographs from the exhibition in 1904, the visual traces are extremely limited. However, the minute books, catalogues and reviews of exhibitions provide additional fragmentary resources and give an insight, for example, into the physical transformation of the spaces for a more contemporary appearance to the Gallery. A major feature of the International Society exhibitions was to mix contemporary art with that of older and deceased artists. This created complex time-space tensions, where older histories and narratives intersected with modern re-interpretations of people, stories and events.

The case studies commence with the opening of the New Gallery in 1888 and close with the International Society, which held its final exhibition at the venue in 1909. In spanning the centuries, the New Gallery was in an almost unique position, successfully navigating the exhibition worlds of both Victorian and Edwardian London. By comparison the Grosvenor Gallery was firmly fixed in the Victorian period, closing in 1890, while other galleries such as the Carfax and Chenil operated almost exclusively during the first years of the twentieth centuries.⁸⁷ The only comparable exhibition space was the Grafton Gallery, based on the corner of Grafton and Bond Street, which opened in 1893 (five years after the New Gallery) and which held a final exhibition in 1922. The history of the Grafton, however, is dominated by the activities of Paul Durand-Ruel and his Impressionist Exhibition of 1905, as well as by Roger Fry and the exhibition, in 1910, of Manet and the Post Impressionists.

A survey of the exhibitions which took place at the Grafton reveals that there were several societies which used both the Grafton and New Gallery spaces. A closer

⁸⁷ The Carfax Gallery was established in 1899, while the Chenil Gallery opened in 1905.

inspection shows that the International Society moved there only after the New Gallery had ceased operating and that the same was true of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, although they held one show at the Grafton in 1906 when the New Gallery was unavailable for hire. The Society of Portrait Painters held seven shows at the Grafton before moving permanently to the New Gallery in 1900. One of the criticisms of the spaces at the Grafton was the lighting, a feature which was notably praised at the New Gallery from the outset. A critic from the *Portfolio* complained, of the Grafton, that ‘each wall is... lighted by the skylight opposite it. The result is that when the pictures are looked at from exactly the right spot they are seen very well. On the other hand, the system limits the choice of point of view, for when the spectator stands too close he is bothered by reflections.’⁸⁸

A special edition of *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide* in the summer of 2015 was entirely devoted to writing about art in England before and after 1900 and which highlights the reluctance of scholars to write across this period, instead confining themselves to Victorian or post-Victorian art history. Peter Trippi argues that

The “Victorian” in art remains sharply distinguished from its “Modernist” foil, the neat coincidence of Queen Victoria’s death in 1901 literally seeming to end the Victorian age at the turn of the century. Indeed, the deaths of other key figures of the Victorian art world—notably Ruskin’s in 1900, and Leighton’s in 1896—further helped affirm a sense of closure to the era. While periodization is not uncommon in the study of art history, the divisions that exist between these two arenas have proved particularly resilient.⁸⁹

The research project on the New Gallery contributes to the search for points of connection between the two eras, particularly in the chapter on the International Society, where links between contemporary work and the past are brought to the fore.

⁸⁸ ‘Art Chronicle,’ *Portfolio* Vol. 24 (January, 1893): 5.

⁸⁹ Martina Droth and Peter Trippi, ‘Change/ Continuity: Writing about Art in Britain before and after 1900,’ *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* Volume 14, no. 2 (Summer 2015), accessed 3 November 2022, <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/summer15/droth-trippi-introduction-writing-about-art-in-britain-before-and-after-1900>.

Despite opening in 1888, near the end of the Victorian era, the New Gallery chose always to look forward. Whether the name of the Gallery was carefully thought out or a chance decision, it appears to have been an apt description for much of the activity that took place within its spaces. Although the first exhibition may have been about maintaining the status quo in a new location, simply taking artists from the Grosvenor and placing their work on different walls, the New Gallery presented a radically fresh exhibition in the Autumn of 1888 with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. From this point onwards they remained at the forefront of new developments in the art world. Whether with the co-existence of image makers (artist, artisan, photographer), the emphasis on education in the Winter exhibitions and by way of supporting international art, or through embracing new methods of display including neutral wall colours, screens and compartmentalised areas, the New Gallery established certain precedents which remain part of the exhibition culture of the twenty-first century.

It should be remembered that Regent Street, the location of the New Gallery, was known as the *New Street* from the time of the New Street Act in 1813 and was only referred to as Regent Street for the first time in 1819.⁹⁰ According to Edward Walford, it was still considered 'to belong to "new" and not to "old" London' in 1878.⁹¹ The adjective, *new*, carries a wide variety of meanings but, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, the addition of *the* as a definite article gives an enhanced definition:

Designating an institution, practice, method, etc., which supercedes, revolutionizes, or revives an earlier form or version of the same kind; modern, progressive, advanced; fashionable, belonging to or characteristic of the most up-to-date trend.⁹²

⁹⁰ 'Regent Street,' accessed 13 November 2022, <https://www.regentstreetonline.com/200th-anniversary/regent-street-s-past-a-200-year-timeline>.

⁹¹ Edward Walford, 'Regent Street and Piccadilly', *Old and New London: A Narrative of its History, its People and its Places*. Volume 4 (London: Cassell, Petter and Galpin, 1873), 246-262.

⁹² Oxford English Dictionary online, accessed 16 September 2020, <https://www-oed-com.libproxy.york.ac.uk/view/Entry/126504?rsk=y&result=1#eid>.

This definition is particularly apposite for the New Gallery. As has been discussed, Hallé and Comyns Carr adapted select strategies which had been used at the Grosvenor Gallery, but their new venture superseded the old and looked forward in a progressive, open-minded manner.

Shortly after the opening in May, 1888, Harry Furniss (1854-1925) published a satirical, humorous cartoon and accompanying rhyme in *Punch*.⁹³ (Figure 8) The characters in the print were taken from paintings hanging in the exhibition, many of which are easily identifiable. (Figure 9 shows an annotated version of Furniss's cartoon) Burne-Jones's *Rock of Doom* and *Doom Fulfilled* take centre stage around two of the columns, while the female figures on the Balcony are drawn from Alphonse Legros's *Femmes et Priere* which was given a significant position in the centre of the east wall of the West Room at Number 8 in the catalogue. Other homages include *Portrait of Miss Wardour* by Sir J. D. Linton, *Zenobia's Last look at Palmyra* by H. Schmalz, *Portrait of Miss Ethel Huxley* by The Hon. John Collier, *The Last Rose of Summer* by John Everett Millais, *Henry Labouchere Esq.* by E.A. Ward, *Portrait of Robert R. Symon Esq.* by Frank Holl, *Paolo and Francesca* by Hallé and *My father and my children* by Hubert Herkomer. In the right-hand bottom corner, the figure of Punch himself is clearly visible, crowned with a laurel leaf.

Furniss adapted Charles Napier Kennedy's *A Fair-haired Slave who made himself King* – on display in the West Room - to incorporate Hallé and Comyns Carr into the image. (Figure 10) He replaced the figures of two women bearing a child into an impluvium with those of the two Directors, swathed in classical robes. The infant they carry represents the spirit, or birth, of the New Gallery and is about to be cleansed or baptised in the fountain of the Central Hall. As a baptism symbolises a new beginning and a new life, this image ties in closely with the project undertaken by Hallé and Comyns Carr at the New Gallery. Furniss gave the picture the title *The First Plunge*, and within the text he asserted that if the infant 'boldly strikes out... he must get on swimmingly all through the season.'⁹⁴ The first Summer Exhibition proved to be a vast

⁹³ Harry Furniss, 'The New Gallery,' *Punch*, 19 May 1888.

⁹⁴ Furniss, 'New Gallery.'

success and established the gallery as a major force within the London exhibition season.

This thesis positions the New Gallery as pivotal in the art world at the fin de siècle. The contribution of the Gallery in embracing contemporary artistic advances, in supporting marginalised art forms, in providing education for visitors and creating new display strategies, distinguished it from other exhibition venues of the time. It held the rare position of traversing two centuries as a major exhibition venue, embracing the great Victorian artists as well as those who found fame during the Edwardian period. In addition to supporting contemporary art, the New Gallery included the work of a range of Old Masters at a number of exhibitions, while the Directors chose to diversify by showing decorative art and photography at a time when these were not considered to be high art forms. Comparisons with other exhibition venues operating during the same period reveal that the New Gallery was always one step ahead of developments in the field of art exhibitions. As such it provides an unrivalled glimpse into the changes in the art world at this period.

Chapter One: Site as Palimpsest

Regent Street today is a world-renowned destination for shopping, dining, wellness and lifestyle welcoming over seven and a half million visitors each year. International brands such as L'Occitane and Karl Lagerfeld, hotels and restaurants at The Langham and Café Royal, and wellbeing centres such as Akasha Holistic are situated along the mile-long avenue, which also provides a major thoroughfare running from south to north in London's West End.

At 121 Regent Street the Burberry flagship store dominates the west side between numbers 115 and 131, a block which stands between Vigo Street and Heddon Street. The entrance to the store opens onto a large central atrium which is surrounded by a first-floor balcony. (Figure 11) This atrium, although remodelled and refunctioned on a number of occasions between 1910 and the present day, was once the Central Hall of the New Gallery, a venue for the exhibition of contemporary paintings, sculpture, and drawings, as well as progressive art forms such as photography and industrial art. For approximately two hundred years prior to operating as a gallery, the space served as a thriving livery yard and post house, before briefly functioning as a provisions market for the Army & Navy Co-operative Society Limited (later known as the Army and Navy Stores Limited) between 1879 and 1881. On the closing of the gallery the site was again refunctioned to house firstly a restaurant and subsequently a cinema, a Seventh Day Adventist Church, a Habitat store and, finally, Burberry's in 2012.¹

When the New Gallery opened its doors on 8 May 1888, there was considerable interest in the building and its interiors, with the press keen to include information about the history of the space as well as its adaptation into an art gallery. This first chapter investigates and critically analyses the site and its interior spaces, together with the wider geographical and cultural locale, to assess how and why these factors were significant to the gallery's success as an exhibition venue. The theories of Rodolfo

¹ The New Gallery Restaurant operated from 1910 to 1913; the New Gallery Kinema (later Cinema) from 1913 to 1953; the Seventh Day Adventist Church from 1953 to 1992; Habitat from 2006 to 2012, after which Burberry took the lease for its flagship store.

Machado provide a framework for the chapter and its exploration of the interior and exterior spaces at the New Gallery. Of prime importance is his article 'Old Buildings as Palimpsest,' first published in the 1976 edition of *Progressive Architecture*. The aim of that paper was to prompt a discussion through theorising on remodelling old buildings, previously 'a kind of minor, neglected area' of architectural theory and practice.² Furthermore, he encouraged the development of 'a theory of remodelling as a branch of architectural theory' and suggested the metaphor of the palimpsest as a way of defining and exploring the hypothesis.³ Machado maintains that it is a highly apposite metaphor for a remodelled building where, as with a parchment, traces of the previous incarnation are still present beneath the later intervention. He argues that remodelling will alter original features through 'partially erasing...qualifying, accentuating, quoting, [or] commenting upon' and that a building may also be refunctioned, where 'a new plot is composed,' as was the case at the New Gallery.⁴

Since Machado's seminal essay other architects and academics have expanded his initial discourse, while continuing to draw on the palimpsest metaphor. A paper written by Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel in 2013 gives an overview of recent developments.⁵ The authors refer to Machado's text as 'moment defining' and trace the more recent history inspired by his hypothesis, including P. Robert's seven 'concepts of conversion' of 1989 which are loosely based on Machado's ideas, together with Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone's assertion that 'the meaning of the building can be either accepted, transformed or suppressed.'⁶ Van Cleempoel has continued to develop theories of adaptive reuse and, more recently, explores the parallels between alterations in existing architecture and translations of poetry.⁷ He argues that the transformation of a building from its past existence into the present poses similar challenges to those faced by the translator of poetry: how to carry forward the legacies

² Rodolfo Machado, 'Old Buildings as Palimpsest,' *Progressive Architecture* Vol. 11 (1976): 46-49.

³ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

⁴ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

⁵ Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel, 'Adaptive Reuse as an Emerging Discipline: An Historic Survey,' *Reinventing architecture and Interiors: A Socio-Political View on Building Adaptation*, edited by Graham Cairns (London: Libri Publishers, 2013).

⁶ Pleveots and Van Cleempoel, 'Adaptive reuse,' 21.

⁷ Koenraad Van Cleempoel, 'Fidelity and Freedom in the Theory of Adaptive Reuse: Thinking with T.S. Eliot and Walter Benjamin,' *Choices and Strategies of Spatial Imagination*, No. 4 (2020): 30-47.

of the original piece in both the material and immaterial. The architect, like the translator, is a mediator, required to respect the original quality and meaning while giving it new, or refreshed, life.

The transformation of the building at 121 Regent Street involved remodelling a multi-layered site, with the New Gallery forming the fourth layer. Machado's theories of adaptive reuse call for a breakdown and analysis of all previous layers in order to understand their value and meaning in the present. The dialogue between old and new creates a fresh critical awareness of converted buildings and their significance. Machado also asserts that, in remodelling, the past permeates the present in two specific ways and these will be used as a structure for investigation throughout the chapter. Firstly, he argues that the past acts as a 'repository,' a place of storage, where original or earlier features are archived (but remain accessible) through renovation, alteration, or accentuation. At the New Gallery elements of both the original livery yard and the provisions market were absorbed into the refunctioned space in precisely these ways. The fountain, for example, was modified from a circular design to a bold square; the balcony surrounding the central atrium became an internal space rather than an exterior walkway; the original metalwork on the balcony was retained but highlighted through intense gilding.

In the second part of the argument Machado suggests that the past acts as a 'moral force' when a building is adapted for reuse.⁸ This force restricts, or controls, the remodelled site through the 'mythical value' of its historical context so that 'the old acquires a moral power.'⁹ This point is of particular interest when investigating the wider cultural geography of the New Gallery and its location on Regent Street, which was conceived as both an elegant shopping destination and a grand thoroughfare running from Carlton House to Regent's Park. However, its creation required the demolition of an earlier route, Swallow Street, which was little more than 'a long,

⁸ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

⁹ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

devious, dirty thoroughfare full of pawnbrokers and dram shops.¹⁰ (Figure 12)

Despite the physical destruction of Swallow Street and the fresh layer of respectability imposed by Regent Street, the cultural and social character of the earlier locale continued to permeate the new. Machado's metaphor of the palimpsest is extended in this first chapter beyond investigating the layers of the building at 121 Regent Street to explore the layers of the broader physical and cultural urban landscape of London's West End.

In the first part of the chapter, the concept of the palimpsest is used to examine the architectural and design interventions at the Regent Street site, the ways in which physical traces of past function remained, how these features were modified or highlighted, and how the various historical layers worked with one another to produce 'a new plot...out of the old words.'¹¹ The building itself becomes central to an understanding of exhibition history in London in this period and its remodelling is analysed to assess in what ways the physical site contributed to the success of the gallery. To grasp the relevance of previous layers of remodelling – the pre-Nash livery yard, the Regent Street livery yard and the provisions market – it is essential to unravel these strata and consider specific adaptations made at each level.

Edward Robert Robson: Remodelling and Refunctioning the site

The New Gallery opened to the public for the first time on Wednesday 9 May 1888 to great critical acclaim. The private view on the Tuesday had been attended by 'all the celebrities of the social and artistic worlds,' including Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Wilde, Sir Arthur Sullivan, the Dukes of Westminster and Northumberland, and the ex-Prime Minister, William Gladstone.¹² Visitors accessed the space from Regent Street through a modest neo-classical portico and continued down a thirty-foot marble-lined corridor to arrive in the spacious Central Hall. (Figure 13) The entryway created a marked

¹⁰ George Augustus Sala, *Twice around the Clock: Or the Hours of the Day and Night in London* (London: Richard Marsh, 1862), 142.

¹¹ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

¹² 'The New Art Gallery in London,' *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 9 May 1888, 5.

contrast to other galleries of the time. Smaller galleries and dealers had shop front doorways with goods displayed in their windows, while the Grosvenor Gallery incorporated a portico by Palladio, formerly belonging to the Church of Santa Lucia in Venice, which complemented the Italian Renaissance design of the façade on Bond Street.¹³ By comparison, the entrance to the New Gallery must have seemed rather unprepossessing, but once inside the ‘Aladdin’s Cave’ visitors were treated to grand design and décor.¹⁴ Off the Hall were two large picture galleries, the North and West Rooms, while the Balcony above provided additional space for artworks to hang.

The opening was eagerly anticipated by public, critics, and artists, not only for the opportunity to view the interior conversion and the works on display, but also to evaluate the success of Hallé and Comyns Carr’s venture after what had been a very public and acrimonious spilt from the Grosvenor Gallery just over six months previously. The secession of Hallé and Comyns Carr from Sir Coutts and Lady Blanche Lindsay’s gallery had been made public in both national and local newspapers, and was dramatically likened to ‘a bomb in the art-world’ by the *Pall Mall Gazette*.¹⁵ Hallé and Comyns Carr sent a letter to *The Times* on 2 November 1887 explaining their resignation as an ‘extreme step’ into which they were ‘reluctantly forced’, blaming ‘the conditions now attached to its management [which] are no longer consistent with the dignity of the art we have tried to serve.’¹⁶ Their letter was given additional weight with the inclusion of supporting notes from Edward Burne-Jones and Lawrence Alma-Tadema, both of whom endorsed the secessionists’ decision to depart. There followed a flurry of correspondence which continued through to the end of January 1888 from the protagonists on both sides, with various journals and newspapers supporting one party or the other. Hallé later commented that he and Comyns Carr ‘were assailed on all sides as though we had committed a crime,’ with such derogatory comments printed

¹³ See Colleen Denney’s detailed description of the Grosvenor Gallery in ‘The Grosvenor Gallery as Palace of Art: An Exhibition Model,’ in *The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England*, edited by Susan P. Casteras and Colleen Denney (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

¹⁴ Alice Comyns Carr, *J. Comyns Carr: Stray Memories by his Wife* (London: MacMillan, 1920), 80.

¹⁵ ‘The Truth about the Grosvenor Split,’ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 November 1887, 1.

¹⁶ C.E. Hallé and J. Comyns Carr, ‘The Grosvenor Gallery,’ letter, *The Times*, 2 November 1887, 9.

in *Vanity Fair* that they were obliged to proceed against the magazine for libel – a case won by the prosecution.¹⁷

Despite Coutts Lindsay's complaint that the letters between him and his ex-Directors were 'not of sufficient public interest to warrant their publication,' it seemed that everyone was clamouring to follow the story.¹⁸ Indeed, at the point where interest might have begun to decline, Hallé and Comyns Carr secured premises on Regent Street to establish their new gallery, and this step fuelled a fresh round of public curiosity. There were two points here that captured the public imagination – firstly, how was a derelict site that had been both a livery yard and a provisions market going to be transformed to house artworks by some of the leading artists of the day; and secondly, who were they going to instruct, at short notice, to carry out this seemingly impossible task?

Edward Robert Robson (1836-1917) was the architect responsible for the ingenious remodelling and refunctioning of the site in Regent Street, where he 'created a new form of an old story' by transforming, accentuating, partially erasing and copying earlier features within the interior space.¹⁹ Introduced to Hallé and Comyns Carr by Philip Webb as 'an expert at lighting in galleries,' he had recently completed the Queen's Hall in Mile End (1886) and the Institute of Painters in Watercolours on Piccadilly (1881-1883), both built from scratch.²⁰ At the Queen's Hall, Robson designed a vast vaulted ceiling sixty feet above floor level, which spanned the one hundred and thirty feet long, seventy-five feet wide room. (Figure 14) The stained glass roof was 'supported by buff-and-gold Corinthian columns, and [the room included] a gallery supported by Greek caryatids.'²¹ The *Daily News* commented that the roof of the Central Hall in the New Gallery, which was 'semi-opaque stained glass in yellow and white,' recalled Robson's design at the Queen's Hall.²² Sadly the Queen's Hall was

¹⁷ C.E. Hallé, *Notes from a Painter's Life* (London: J. Murray, 1909), 159.

¹⁸ Sir Coutts Lindsay, 'The Grosvenor Gallery,' letter, *The Times*, 28 January 1888, 12.

¹⁹ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

²⁰ Hallé, *Notes*, 161.

²¹ Deborah Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform in Late-Victorian London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 191.

²² 'The New Gallery,' *Daily News*, 28 April, 1888, 5.

destroyed by fire in 1931 although the Octagonal Library, also designed by Robson, survives today and forms part of the Queen Mary University of London.²³ At the Institute on Piccadilly, Robson's design incorporated six shops on the ground floor, each with a basement and mezzanine, behind which stood the large Prince's Hall, available for hire for public and private functions. On the upper floors he created a space for three large galleries, again with a vast, vaulted, stained glass roof. After these commissions Robson was offered a knighthood, but declined the honour, declaring himself to be content with 'Plain Mr. Robson.'²⁴

Machado argues that 'each designer will draw his own interpretation' of an existing building and that the outcome of remodelling will noticeably depend on the previous experiences, collaborations and personal taste of the architect involved in a project.²⁵ When analysing the interventions at 121 Regent Street it is important to acknowledge what Robson brought to the project, and how 'the designer's view of the world' affected the result.²⁶ Despite his distinguished career, Robson is little known these days and indeed the most comprehensive assessment of the man and his oeuvre remains an article written by his son, Philip Robson, for the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* on his father's death in 1917.²⁷ It is worth examining this article in some detail to consider Robson's contribution in the light of Machado's argument.

Philip Robson gives a brief overview of his father's working life, which included a three-year apprenticeship with John Dobson of Newcastle followed by a further three years in the office of Sir George Gilbert Scott in London. In 1860, Robson set up his own practice with J.W. Walton-Wilson, establishing offices in both Durham and London. He was appointed to the office of Architect to the Cathedral of Durham during which time he restored the Galilee, the Chapel of Nine Altars, and the Central Tower. He and his

²³ Previously known as East London College and renamed Queen Mary College in 1934. In 2000 the group of colleges and teaching hospitals, including St. Bartholomew's Hospital, was renamed again to become Queen Mary University of London.

²⁴ Philip Robson, 'Edward Robert Robson, F.S.A. A Memoir by his Son,' *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* Vol. 24, no. 6 (February, 1917): 94.

²⁵ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

²⁶ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

²⁷ Robson, 'E. R. Robson,' 94.

family then spent around six years in Liverpool where he held the position of Architect and Surveyor to the Corporation of the city, before relocating permanently to London in order to take up his role as first Architect to the London School Board. The Education Act of 1870 had forced the issue of the need for hundreds of new schools to be built, largely in the east end of London. According to his son, Robson was responsible for most of these schools, 'setting his mark definitely on the architectural appearance of London.'²⁸

Philip Robson's article draws attention to several characteristics of his father's personality, as well as his approach to a project, which are relevant to the remodelling at the New Gallery. He claims that his father possessed an 'extraordinarily rapid grasp of the essentials of each new problem,' a skill that must have proven enormously useful at the New Gallery with such limited time to assess, design and oversee the remodelling and refunctioning of the site.²⁹ Furthermore, Robson was adamant that a building should be suited to its function and was highly critical, for example, of 'architects, who were then building schools totally unsuited for their purpose.'³⁰ He spent several years travelling extensively throughout Europe and North America, studying the design and build of a large number of educational establishments. On his return Robson published *Schools Architecture* (1874), essentially a guide to best practice in building new schools and in which he advocated, amongst other features, the use of large windows to allow in plenty of natural light.³¹ He believed strongly in the importance of natural light and its influence both on the atmosphere of a room as well as on the well-being of its occupants, and this belief, which was dominant in his designs for schools, also became central to his work at the New Gallery where diffused top light 'satisf[ied] the most exacting demands of the artist.'³²

Robson's belief in the centrality of function in architecture is significant in his designs for the New Gallery, where the building was re-purposed from the provisions market

²⁸ Robson, 'E. R. Robson,' 93.

²⁹ Robson, 'E.R. Robson,' 93.

³⁰ Robson, 'E.R. Robson,' 94.

³¹ Edward R. Robson, *Schools Architecture* (London: J. Murray, 1874).

³² 'The New Gallery,' *The Times*, 9 May 1888, 10.

and livery yard. Machado refers to the process of altering the building's content as 're-semanticization,' where a fresh meaning is given to an existing site through change of purpose.³³ Robson's designs show a clear understanding of function in his considerations of the lighting of rooms, the creation of a natural flow of movement from one space to another, and the choice of background colours and materials that were appropriate to an exhibition venue. He brought with him the experience of his recent work at the Institute of Painters where the gallery spaces were given strong top lighting, and also at the Queen's Hall where he created spaciousness in an elegant interior.

A final point made by Philip Robson is that of the influence of John Ruskin (1819-1900). Ruskin and E.R. Robson were great friends and admirers of each other's work, the latter keeping an annotated copy of Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* by his bedside.³⁴ Philip Robson quotes from a passage in the *Fourth Lamp* (Beauty), which had been highlighted in his father's copy, and in which Ruskin argues for the dominance of one feature, because 'there can be no proportion in equal things.'³⁵ At the New Gallery Robson ensured a dominant feature in all areas, whether an architectural component such as the fountain in the Central Hall, or a decorative feature such as the gilding on the wrought iron of the Balcony.

Robson's designs for the New Gallery are preserved in the National Archives, Kew and comprise seven drawings and one tracing.³⁶ (Figures 15, 16 and 17) They include ground, first floor, and roof plans, together with a selection of cross-sections and an elaborate, neo-classical design for the Regent Street entrance. (Figure 18) This latter design was not fulfilled, with the completed portico being simpler and less ornate. With the exception of this last design the plans are very basic, perhaps a result of the time-pressure imposed on the project.³⁷ His drawings reveal a manipulation of space through the reorganisation of existing structures, a remodelling of specific features,

³³ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

³⁴ Robson. 'E.R. Robson,' 94-95.

³⁵ Robson, 'E.R. Robson,' 94.

³⁶ Regent Street, no. 21 (sic): The New Gallery, 1888, LRRO 1/2441, National Archives.

³⁷ My thanks to my friend, Neil Fletcher, for examining the plans and drawing this conclusion.

and a focus on natural light through vast expanses of glass, both clear and stained. These plans, according to Machado, can 'be regarded as the equivalent of a palimpsest,' in that they clearly show one layer of building superimposed on another.³⁸ Machado, in his article, cites the example of Giuseppe Jappelli (1783-1852) who simply drew straight over the original drawings of a garden he was redesigning at Castelgomberto, Vicenza, Italy.³⁹

Although Robson did not re-use original drawings, his plans nonetheless reveal layers through the use of different colours and weight of pencil. He uses faint pencil lines to indicate features that were in situ at the start of the project but would be removed or altered as a result of his interventions. These faint lines show features such as the original staircase, which was subsequently removed, the earlier round fountain base, and some areas which were used as display alcoves by the provisions market but which may reflect converted stables or stalls from the years prior to 1879. Heavier pencil lines indicate the planned alterations, such as the new square shape to the fountain base, while a thick grey wash denotes existing solid walls, and the colour red indicates new structural walls and supports. The plans demonstrate that the new building was dependent upon the footprint and structure of earlier layers and that these accumulated layers resulted in a distinctive site which 'retain[ed] a remembrance of the former function and value.'⁴⁰

Robson was faced with particular restrictions in his designs. First was the limited amount of time available, with the opening summer exhibition planned for early May, 1888. Philip Robson claimed that his father had merely six weeks to carry out the work, although an article in the *Times* indicates that the project commenced on 2 February, 1888 and that it was completed just in time for the private view on 8 May.⁴¹ However, three months was still an astonishingly short time to carry out the remodelling and refunctioning of the site, and the labourers provided by Peto Brothers builders worked

³⁸ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 46.

³⁹ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 47.

⁴⁰ Sally Stone, 'Re-readings: The Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings,' *Structural Studies, Repair & Maintenance of Heritage Architecture* Vol. 9 (2005): 126.

⁴¹ 'The New Gallery,' *The Times*, 9 May 1888, 10.

both day and night. Alice Comyns Carr recalls that her husband would go to the site each evening to get the night shift started and, additionally, that they would both drop by after an evening at the theatre to track the progress.⁴² She describes the massive flares from the building site which lit up the length of Regent Street during this period to enable the night team to carry out their work.⁴³ The huge workforce of around two hundred by day and a further one hundred and fifty by night, was acknowledged by Hallé and Comyns Carr as being integral to the success of the project. On the first Sunday after launching, there was a special open day organised for all the workers and their families in thanks for their extraordinary dedication to completing the work on time.⁴⁴

An additional, equally challenging, restriction was the shape and size of the plot, pre-determined by the surrounding streets and buildings which had been in situ since the early seventeenth century. These physical constraints determined the site that was to become the New Gallery. In order to interpret the traces left by previous physical layers this next section examines the three main interventions on the site prior to Robson's designs of 1888 to reveal the 'juxtaposition and co-presence' of previous forms.⁴⁵ These three interventions are, firstly, the pre-Nash stables and livery yard on Swallow Street, secondly the post-Nash yard on Regent Street, and finally the store created by the Army & Navy Co-operative Society. As previously stated, the New Gallery forms the fourth layer on the same site.

The First and Second Layers: Mulgahy Close and Nash's Regent Street

The site originally formed part of an area of pasture land called Mulgahy Close which was owned by the Abbot and Convent of Abingdon until becoming Crown property in 1536, in whose hands it still remains. The first recorded building on the site is shown on John Strype's map of 1720, an updated version of Richard Blome's map of 1694, where the Sadler's Arms Yard in Swallow Street occupies the spot which was to become 121

⁴² Eve Adam, ed., *Mrs. Joseph Comyns Carr's Reminiscences* (London: Hutchinson, 1925), 159.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ 'The New Gallery – We have received the following letter,' *The Times*, 15 May 1888, 10.

⁴⁵ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

Regent Street. (Figure 19) Although the map reveals no details of the structure of the building, it does indicate the shape of the livery yard within the wider expanse. The yard was approached via a short alleyway on Swallow Street before expanding to occupy much of the area between the existing intersecting roads. Space was a necessary requirement for a yard which would have been filled with horses, coaches, travellers and all the necessary luggage which accompanied them. Although this first building was destroyed when Swallow Street was demolished, the site retained both its function and footprint when rebuilt.

A plan of Mulgahy Close shows the line of Regent Street superimposed on Swallow Street, with the Sadler's Arms Yard on the left of the image. (Figure 20) This plan reveals that it was the east side of Swallow Street, rather than the west, which was moved back by around thirty feet to make way for the new avenue. The frontage on the west side remained in the same position and a new livery yard was built on the same spot as the Sadler's Arms Yard by Robert Newman. Robert and his older brother, William, had previously leased the Sadler's Arms Yard on Swallow Street from 1809, but on the creation of Regent Street Robert bought a ninety-nine-year lease on this plot commencing 1824.⁴⁶ He constructed a post house with extensive accommodation and a large yard behind at numbers 121 and 121A, creating a celebrated posting establishment. Clearly a colourful figure, Robert Newman was 'a person of considerable importance... and it was one of his boasts that he drove Nelson to Dover and tooled the Duke of Wellington down to Walmer Castle after the Battle of Waterloo'.⁴⁷ He operated a highly successful business, leaving nearly £35,000 in his will on his death in 1863 when the yard passed to his son Charles, whose son, Robert (1858-1926) was the co-founder of the Proms with Henry Wood.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Robert appears to have been the more successful of the two brothers. Records show that he leased not only 121 and 121A Regent Street, but also 115, 117 and 119, together with 1 Vigo Lane which was established as a post office. He then appears to have built and subsequently sub-let a number of these buildings. See the Fifth Report from the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues for details of the leases, which ran for 99 years from 5 April 1824. CRES 60/3, National Archives.

Fiona McCarthy claims that the land was 'granted by the Crown to a job-master named Newman as a reward for having delivered the first news of victory at Waterloo.' Fiona McCarthy, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* (London: Faber & Faber, 2011), 375.

⁴⁷ 'The New Gallery,' *Daily News*, 28 April 1888, 5.

⁴⁸ England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 for Robert Newman, died 17 December 1863, probate 14 January 1864. National Archives.

A drawing by John Tallis (1817-1876) of the newly-built Regent Street façades shows the front elevation of the block from numbers 115 to 131, forming a layer imposed on the earlier Swallow Street. (Figure 3) The drawing forms part of Tallis's series of pamphlets entitled *Tallis's London Streetviews*, which, although undated, are likely to have been executed between 1838 and 1840.⁴⁹ An inspection of the illustration reveals that the entrance to the yard was on the ground floor of the unnumbered building. Numbering in London streets was rather random during this period, which explains why this site is sometimes referred to as '121' and sometimes '121A'. In Tallis's drawing, the entrance to Newman's yard lies between numbers 121 and 123 and its design is distinct when compared to the other facades in this block. Numbers 123 to 131 form one cohesive section, while numbers 117 to 121, with the double block at 115, form a second group, reflecting the fact that Newman was the holder of all the leases from 115 to 121 and that he organised the construction of the buildings on these sites. The gateway to the yard comprised two large doors, probably made of wood, with a separate shop to one side. Three additional levels rose above the ground floor, the first with large arched windows.

Census records verify that Robert Newman and his family lived above the yard from 1824 to his death in 1863.⁵⁰ In 1861 he is listed as employing twenty men, with his eldest son, Charles, residing next door with his own wife and children. The other retail outlets at ground floor level included Herbert Henderson jewellers, Scott Adie woollen drapers and Philip Augustus Barnard, artist photographer.⁵¹ According to the 1871 census the yard and post house were still operational at this date, but no longer run by the Newman family. Edward Cutbush is named as the 'yard manager and post master' of 121 Regent Street, while his residence is listed as number 123, which had previously been occupied by Charles Newman.⁵² The yard must have formally closed sometime

For further information on Robert Newman, co-founder of the Proms, see Matt Griffin, '10 August 1895: The first ever "First Night of the Proms,"' *Royal Albert Hall*, accessed 14 March 2023, www.royalalberthall.com/about-the-hall/news/2015/august/10-august-1895-the-first-ever-proms-concert/.

⁴⁹ John Tallis, *London Street Views, 1838-1840: Together with the Revised and Enlarged Views of 1847* (London: London Topographical Society, 2002 [1847]).

⁵⁰ Census records 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871 for Robert Newman and 121 Regent Street.

⁵¹ 1861 Census.

⁵² 1871 Census.

between 1871 and 1879, probably the result of stables and yards moving out of the increasingly urbanised West End of London. At this point the site was both remodelled and refunctioned, creating the third layer of the palimpsest.

The Third layer: Provisions Market

On 4 May 1880, the Army and Navy Provisions Market Limited, a subsidiary of the Army and Navy Co-operative Society Limited, opened the first store of its kind in London and appeared proud to choose a site which 'was for many years occupied by the well-known stables of Newman and Co.'⁵³ The aim of the company was 'to apply the co-operative system to the sale of meat, poultry, and fish, and thus to cheapen to its members the price of those necessary commodities.'⁵⁴ While the members were, at first, limited to those connected to the Armed Forces and Navy, by December 1880 the membership had opened to anyone willing to pay the subscription. In some respects, the conversion to a provisions market represented a step backwards to the time when the earlier Swallow Street had been full of cheap shops, many of which sold fresh meat and produce. The fact that the Provisions Market was endorsed in this location may reflect the gratitude of the British government for those servicemen who had recently fought in the Anglo-Zulu or the second Anglo-Afghan wars. Although the final outcome of the Anglo Zulu war was a British victory, the battle at Isandlwana on 22 January 1879, had resulted in the deaths of over 1,700 British troops.

The commission to carry out the conversion from stables to market was carried out by a Mr. A. Beddingfield and the *Morning Post* complimented his 'artistic taste' in doing so.⁵⁵ The old stables were removed and the central courtyard was lined with white, glazed tiles, whilst 'every yard of space' was utilised for sales of various produce: the ground floor held meat, fish and game in the central court, with fruit on the right and flowers on the left, while the balcony was reserved for displays of dairy, vegetables, agricultural and garden supplies. The roof of the central court was glazed, with metal

⁵³ 'Army and Navy Provision Market,' *Morning Post*, 5 May 1880, 2.

⁵⁴ 'Army and Navy Provision Market,' *Morning Post*, 5 May 1880, 2.

⁵⁵ I cannot find any further information on A. Beddingfield who is named as a builder and architect.

pillars supporting the new structure. There appear to have been some remarkable appliances installed for the hygiene of fresh produce and the health of visitors. From the fountain in the central court, large inlet shafts led to each department for drainage and cleanliness. In addition, ventilation shafts were positioned vertically to move rotten air upwards, while gas jets in the ceiling functioned to 'rarify' the air.⁵⁶ The market itself was short-lived, closing in 1881 due to bankruptcy, with one journalist observing that 'I fail to see that the prices are an inducement; they are the same as the retail shops.'⁵⁷

Three pieces of visual evidence for this stratum of intervention clarify the way the space was used not only as a provisions market but also as the earlier livery yard. The first is an outline drawing dating to 1879 showing the ground floor only and which forms part of the Assignment of Lease from Henry E. Coe to the Army and Navy Provision Market Limited.⁵⁸ (Figure 21) It is not entirely certain at what date Coe purchased the lease, but in view of the fact that Robert Newman died in 1863 and his son Charles in 1868, it must have been after this date. Coe was an architect who worked with, amongst others, George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), and it may be that he bought the lease of 121 with the idea of developing it but that his plans were not executed.⁵⁹

This is a to-scale drawing (scale 12 feet: 1 inch) indicating the exterior walls, covered stalls for horses, entrance ways, and one staircase. It is somewhat limited in its information, but it does confirm that the main gateway was on Regent Street, with an additional entrance/exit on Heddon Street, with its earlier name of Glasshouse Street being used on this document. The plan also confirms the amount of space available at ground floor level. A second piece of visual evidence, a block design plan of the Heddon Street frontage dated 1879, indicates that the provisions market used this alternative entrance to display wares and attract passing trade, since the entrance on

⁵⁶ 'Army and Navy Provision Market,' *Morning Post*, 5 May 1880, 2.

⁵⁷ 'London Gossip,' *Hampshire & Portsmouth Telegraph*, 19 May 1880, 1.

⁵⁸ Assignment of Lease of 121 Regent Street (and the stables and premises adjoining and in rear), September 5, 1879, 1856/34, Papers of Eland Hore Patterson, Solicitors, Westminster City Archives.

⁵⁹ Both Coe and Robson worked in the office of George Gilbert Scott, however it is unlikely that they would have known each other from here. Coe had left Scott's office by 1849, while Robson worked with Scott between 1854 and 1859.

Regent Street was little more than a doorway. (Figure 22) Although by comparison to Robson's designs, these drawings are rather crude and simplified, they can also be considered a palimpsest. A key on the plan explains that the red lines show the proposed new building frontage, while the blue indicates the projection of the plinth and the black represents the existing building lines.

A single photograph of the *Old Market* provides valuable information about how the interior would have looked when operating as a market. (Figure 23) The photograph is one of a series taken by Bedford Lemere and Company, the foremost architectural photographers of the period, and must date to between May 1880 and the end of 1881, when the provisions market ceased trading. This image is the only known visual record of the site as a market and therefore provides vital evidence of this particular layer of intervention. It shows the central hall from the southeast looking towards the area outside what became the North Room of the New Gallery, up four shallow steps. The photograph depicts the market in operation with carcasses of fresh meat hanging from the arches along the side of the hall. These would have originally been individual stalls for the horses housed in Newman's yard. A large table in front of the archways is laid out with additional fresh produce. Clearly in view are the main staircase, the fountain, the balcony with its original wrought iron railings, four of the twelve cast iron pillars, and the supported roof. Comyns Carr recognised that the 'partial reconstruction' of the site by the provisions market 'aided us very materially in our work,' although the task to remodel 'remained formidable enough.'⁶⁰ Without Beddingfield's plan, which seems to be lost, it is not possible to ascertain any further changes he made to the rooms beyond the central hall, but obviously the site was emptied of all stalls and stables to create space for provisions to be displayed.

The Fourth Layer: The New Gallery

Machado argues that traces of previous designs will remain embedded or partially hidden when a building is remodelled. These traces, however, can be recorded in ways

⁶⁰ J. Comyns Carr, *Some Eminent Victorians: Personal Recollections in the World of Art and Letters* (London: Duckworth, 1908), 126.

other than the fabric of the building. At 121 Regent Street the historical footprint, which is still evident today at the Burberry store, provides an ancient trace of earlier use. There are also a number of visual resources which provide information on previous layers and interventions including maps, plans, drawings and photographs. In addition, there are written accounts describing the interior of the gallery, from newspaper and journal articles, to the diaries of artists and visitors, and finally to the exhibition catalogues which contain a combination of written and visual information. We are fortunate to have a selection of all these resources to provide information about Robson's remodelling and refunctioning of the site, which forms the fourth layer of the palimpsest.

The original steep staircase with twenty-four treads encroached the Central Hall, almost reaching the fountain. Moving the staircase was a practical step in creating the New Gallery interior as it took up a considerable amount of the area within the Hall – a room destined to become an integral part of the remodelled spaces. Leaving it would have been both an impediment to the flow of movement around the rooms, as well as a limitation on the area available for the display of sculpture. Robson removed this staircase completely, in addition to another smaller one which is visible on his ground floor plan between what became the West and North rooms, leaving no trace of either in his remodelled building.

Robson carefully reorganised this space and tucked a new access route to the Balcony in a small area off the Central Hall between the shop (later the South Room) and the West Room, so that the new staircase was not visible to the visitor on entering the Hall, although it can be glimpsed in the far recess in a drawing of the Hall. (Figure 24) This meant that uninterrupted views were provided of the displayed artworks, the sumptuous decoration and the many striking architectural features, which in turn accentuated the natural beauty of the space. Machado argues that a trace of previous features remains when an old building is remodelled. However, with the removal of the main staircase all material evidence of this feature disappeared from the site, but the trace is archived in the photograph of the Old Market together with Robson's plans,

which indicate his modifications. Robson re-invented this space using his personal vision to combine a new function with luxurious design.

The only substantial criticism of the New Gallery was the reorganised access route. The *Athenaeum* referred to it as the 'sole defect' in the design, criticising 'the smallness of the staircase leading to the Balcony.'⁶¹ Examining a drawing of a private view at the New Gallery, which depicts a number of ladies in long, tight, restricting dresses, it is clear that walking upstairs in any building must have provided quite a challenge. (Figure 25) The same article conceded that most of the art at the New Gallery was displayed on the ground floor, so that it was not actually necessary to ascend the staircase. This was to become a contentious point, as will be seen in the later chapters, with drawings and the work of lesser-known artists often seen to be relegated to the upstairs area.

The remodelled interior drew on a number of features from classical architecture including the use of marble, the incorporation of modified Corinthian columns and the refashioned fountain to resemble a Roman impluvium – a low pool in a courtyard, positioned to collect rainwater from the roof. These features also appeared in the paintings of a number of the artists who exhibited at the Gallery from its inception, particularly Alma-Tadema and Frederic Leighton, both of whom also incorporated impluvia and other classical features in their homes. Tadema's strong links to antiquity were explored in the recent exhibition *Lawrence Alma-Tadema, At Home in Antiquity*.⁶² In his painting of *Water Pets* (1874), for example, a young woman lies on a marble floor in the atrium of a classical villa, gazing into the impluvium. (Figure 26) Marlies Stoker, in her chapter, 'Laurens alma, born and Bred in Friesland,' explains that when Tadema visited Rome for the first time in 1863 with his new wife, Pauline, he 'became infatuated with classical antiquity and decided to bring Roman history to life in his own art.'⁶³ Leighton's *The Bath of Psyche* demonstrates a similar homage to the classical, with inspiration drawn from the Roman statue of *Venus Callipyge* (white marble,

⁶¹ 'The New Gallery,' Fine Arts, *Athenaeum*, 19 May 1888, 635.

⁶² Elizabeth Prettejohn and Peter Trippi eds., *Lawrence Alma-Tadema: At Home in Antiquity* (Munich, London, New York: Prestel, 2016).

⁶³ Prettejohn and Trippi, *Alma-Tadema*, 29.

assumed to be a copy of a lost Greek statue, National Archaeological Museum, Naples) set against a framework of antique marble columns. (Figure 27)

The photograph of the Old Market reveals a highly elaborate fountain with a round base, a stone central sculpture and two basins. It is extremely difficult to discern the details of the sculpture from the old photograph, but the designs appear to be a combination of floral and figurative motifs. It seems unlikely that such an elaborate sculpture would have been part of the livery yard, although a simple drinking fountain for horses would have been a necessity, or certainly the availability of water to be transferred into buckets for the animals. As the fountain base is extremely simple it is plausible that this was in existence first, with the elaborate sculpture perhaps added by the provisions market.

Robson's remodelling of the fountain creates 'a new form of an old story,' where the original feature is partially altered to create a fresh image.⁶⁴ His choice to remove the cumbersome central sculpture and to modify the base to that of a rectangle may have been a reflection of the revival of interest in classical features as suggested above. (Figure 28) The new square water feature echoed the square marble columns (the encased cast iron columns) and the rectangular shape of the hall with its straight lines. However, by leaving the base of the fountain, Robson continued to pay homage to the past, where the previous histories of the livery yard and market were 'represented by the old object itself.'⁶⁵ The transformed fountain also formed a focal point for visitors on arrival in the hall, where they were immersed in a multi-sensory experience: the sound of water, the lush planting, and the cool marble putting 'one in a favourable disposition for looking easily and without hurry at pictures and sculpture.'⁶⁶

Within the hall the twelve modified pillars generated monumental impact, structure and a sense of balance to the space. Robson adapted the purely functional cast iron supports and transformed them into pieces of beauty, encasing them with Cipollino

⁶⁴ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

⁶⁵ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

⁶⁶ 'The New Gallery,' *Saturday Review*, 12 May 1888, 561.

marble so that they presented ‘the appearance of massive marble shafts... [with] delicately modelled capitals of Greek type, solidly gilded.’⁶⁷ (Figure 29) The capitals were a modified Corinthian design with foliage carvings below a geometric moulding. Cipollino means ‘little onion’ in Italian, although this marble was in fact quarried in Greece. It has spectacular green and white stripes, the white bands composed of calcite marble and the green being rich in micas and chlorite. Above the columns the architrave, frieze and cornices were covered with platinum ‘giving the effect of dead silver.’⁶⁸ The press enthused about the use of marble to hide the ugly, functional supports and this craftsmanship is an excellent example of Robson’s reinvention of the architectural fabric of the building, where his use of material re-invigorates the existing space.

The *Athenaeum* suggested that the architect’s extensive use of marble in the hall – it was used on the walls and the floor as well as the columns - might ‘become the rage, thanks to the taste Mr. Robson has displayed.’⁶⁹ Marble had, until now, been used extensively as an external decoration but was little used for interior design, although it could be seen in the interiors of several artists’ residences in London. Of particular note is the Arab Hall at Leighton House dating from 1877 to 1881 and designed by George Aitchison (1825-1916), where marble and mosaics were combined to create a dazzling, colourful effect. Aitchison had ‘delivered a valuable discourse on the use of marbles in interior decoration’ shortly before the opening of the New Gallery, indicating the recent fascination with the material.⁷⁰ How Robson managed to source such a wealth of diverse marbles within the space of three months is worth considering. They may have been supplied by importers such as Farmer and Brindley, who in 1881 claimed to be ‘sole agents for grand antique Cipollino marble,’ which was used extensively in the Central Hall.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Henry Blackburn, *New Gallery Notes* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1888), 3.

⁶⁸ Blackburn, *New Gallery Notes*, 3.

⁶⁹ ‘The New Gallery,’ *Athenaeum*, 19 May 1888, 635.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Kelly’s Post Office Directory, London, 1881.

Aitchison also worked on Alma-Tadema's house at Grove End Road, St. John's Wood, where the artist's double height studio was filled with cool marble which, together with the vast windows, emulated the effects of light. Alma-Tadema had been incorporating images of marble in his canvasses since the early 1870s as can be seen in *Improvvisatore* (1872, oil on panel, 64.7 x 44 cm, Royal Academy of Arts, London) and *Reading from Homer* (1885, oil on canvas, 91.8 x 183.5 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA). Although, notably, the marble represented tends to be white or off-white, rather than the vibrant colours used by Robson at the New Gallery.

This growth in popularity and availability of marble in England correlated with Robson's own enthusiasm for the material, intensified on his very recent visit to Istanbul where he had been 'fired with the wonderful Sancta Sophia and the right use of marble.'⁷² Possibly he visited London's Greek Orthodox church, St. Sophia in Bayswater, on his return, where polychromatic marbles were also incorporated into the interior. Robson used at least four different marbles in the hall. In addition to Cippolino on the columns, he utilised Giallo Antico, a marble with a pale, yellowish gold colour, for the main fabric of the walls. In between the great slabs of marble he placed bands and borders of Pavonazza, a pale blue/grey, together with Rosso Antico, which contains deep crimson hues. (Figure 30)

This sumptuous display of texture and colour may have been the motivation behind a writer from the *Pall Mall Gazette* describing the space as 'Halicarnassian.'⁷³ This adept play on the names of the two Directors alludes to the ancient city of Halicarnassus which stood on the site of modern Bodrum, Turkey. Halicarnassus held one of the seven ancient wonders, the tomb of Mausolos, built between 353 and 350 BC, which stood at around forty metres in height and was spectacularly decorated with sculptures carved both in the round and in relief.' Although now ruined, some of the colossal free-standing statues, as well as fragments of the vast, marble, four-horse chariot which crowned the pyramid roof, can be seen in Room Twenty-One of the British Museum.

⁷² Robson, 'E. R. Robson,' 95.

⁷³ 'The New Gallery,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 9 May 1888, 1.

The use of the Halicarnassus comparison reinforces the power and beauty of Robson's project, clearly considered to be a triumph of architectural design in 1888.

The Balcony surrounding the Hall would originally have been an exterior walkway, looking out over the central atrium where horses and carriages arrived and departed, as can be seen in a drawing of The Angel Inn, a traditional nineteenth-century livery yard. (Figure 31) It also led to residential spaces for the large Newman family while they were running the business. In a striking transformation, Robson refunctioned this space into an exhibition area in its own right, as well as a place from which to view artworks in the Central Hall below. Paying homage to the fact that it was originally exposed to the elements, Robson installed fourteen clear round, domed windows running around the Balcony, so that the visitor was still able to see the sky above. Photographs of this space reveal how the light flooded in, not only onto the Balcony but also into the Central Hall. (Figure 32) A little further north on Regent Street stood the Hanover Chapel, situated between Hanover Street and Princes Street. Built in 1825 by Charles Robert Cockerell, it was demolished in 1896 as part of the rebuild of Regent Street. However, the Chapel included a large, domed skylight, which may perhaps have provided Robson with inspiration for the lighting on the balcony at the New Gallery.

On the Balcony Robson retained the decorative wrought iron which is visible on the photograph of the Old Market. (Figure 23) However, he dramatically highlighted the decoration by gilding it throughout the entire Balcony area. In this way, Robson acknowledged earlier artisans by resurrecting their work and drawing attention to the skill employed in creating it. The gilding was evidently the final piece of work to be completed at the gallery before the private view, and Alice Comyns Carr recalls that it 'was only finished through Joe inducing the frame-gilders to work with the builders' men – an infringement of custom which, it seemed, only the affection which they bore him inclined them to overlook.⁷⁴ The railings would originally have been installed when Newman built the yard in 1824. They were retained while the site functioned as a provisions market and now became a major feature of the site as an exhibition venue.

⁷⁴ A. Comyns Carr, *Stray Memories*, 79-80.

The result of Robson's remodelling was to create five distinct exhibition spaces, the boundaries of which were largely dictated by the first building on the site. During 1888 the South Room functioned as a shop, but this was incorporated into the body of the gallery by creating a doorway from the Central Hall early in 1889. The Hall provided the largest amount of space, measuring sixty-four by forty-eight feet, with the West Room at sixty-eight by thirty-four feet and the North Room at sixty-two by thirty-five feet. The South Room was the smallest exhibition space at approximately thirty by thirty-five feet, and there was the additional space on the Balcony. The Hall, as mentioned above, had marble floors as well as walls, but Robson utilized a warmer texture on the ground floor gallery spaces with wood parquet. The walls of these rooms were then covered with Venetian red, similar to that used in the National Gallery.

Red was used in a number of public exhibition spaces during the nineteenth century, including the Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Royal Academy, as well as other private galleries such as the Grosvenor. The supremacy of the colour had long been understood. According to Carmella Padilla, in her essay, 'The Power of Red,' the colour signified luck to the ancient Chinese, represented male vigour in the early Arab world, was worn by Cardinals in Rome and royalty around the world.⁷⁵ It could also reference blood, death, shame and adultery. Charlotte Klonk analyses nineteenth century display in relation to theories of vision and receptivity, particularly Goethe's *Theory of Colours* (translated by Charles Eastlake, keeper at the National Gallery) which influenced the choice of red as a standard wall colour for museums and private collections in Italy, Germany and Britain.⁷⁶ In 1888 it was accepted as the standard colour for exhibition venues although, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, visiting exhibition societies had disparate opinions about the most appropriate wall colour against which to display their artworks with some taking measures to temporarily change the red to a lighter hue.

⁷⁵ Carmella Padilla, 'The Power of Red,' in *A Red Like no Other: How Cochineal Colored the World*, edited by Carmella Padilla & Barbara Anderton (New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2015), 14.

⁷⁶ Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 30-33.

A sizeable basement housed additional storage, packing and office space, as well as a small retiring room for the ladies. Robson incorporated Haywards lights where possible in the basement area to provide natural light in this potentially dark space. Haywards lights were a relatively new invention patented by brothers William and Edward Hayward in 1871, a type of horizontal window glazed with an obliquely-cut prism which bent incoming light through ninety degrees.⁷⁷ These were set into pavements to provide illumination to basement areas. The use of these novel windows corroborates with Robson's belief that good lighting was essential and also supports Machado's argument that each architect will bring their own priorities to a project.

The Hierarchy of Spaces

From the start, the West Room was the most important exhibition space, reserved for major contemporary artists at the inaugural summer exhibition in 1888, especially those artists who had defected from the Grosvenor in support of Hallé and Comyns Carr. At this first exhibition there were three Burne-Jones paintings spanning the centre of the west wall of the West Room, with George Frederic Watts, Hubert von Herkomer, William Blake Richmond and Alphonse Legros also represented in here. The only extant photograph of the West Room at the exhibition depicts the centre section of the east wall, running from numbers one to fourteen. (Figure 33) Legros's large oil painting of *Femmes en Prière* (mentioned in the Introduction with reference to Harry Furniss's cartoon), dominates the wall at number eight, directly in the middle of the section. A selection of comfortable seating lines the middle of the room, with a double-sided leather sofa directly opposite Legros's work. The walls, although the red is not apparent in a monochrome photograph, are startlingly dark against the paintings, while the canvasses themselves are displayed in a largely symmetrical fashion and neither too low nor high to be obscured.

In the North Room, Alma-Tadema's work prevailed on the east wall with five of his six submissions hanging together to form a central group. The two surviving photographs

⁷⁷ L.C. Winterton, *Years of Reflection: The Story of Haywards of the Borough, 1783-1953* (London: Harley Publishing, 1954).

of the North Room at this exhibition focus on the shorter north and south walls. (Figures 34 and 35) On the north wall, two portraits by Herkomer hang at numbers 113 and 117, creating another symmetrical, balanced display, while on the south wall a large painting by J.J. Shannon, *Portrait of Mrs Williamson*, dominates a spot near the entrance door. The Balcony contained a number of drawings and watercolours, including Robson's design for the Queen's Hall at the People's Palace, a selection of Burne-Jones sketches and Walter Crane's *A Water Lily*, visible in a further photograph taken of the exhibition. (Figure 36)

The Central Hall provided, from the outset, the most versatile of spaces. It could be viewed from both the Balcony above, as well as from the raised area outside the North Room, yet could also be approached from doorways on the north, south, east or west. This meant that objects within the space were viewed from every possible angle. These objects, over the years, comprised sculpture, ceramics, furniture, jewellery and other decorative items, but also included the visitors to the gallery who could be viewed and accessed in the same way. In addition, the Central Hall was both the first and the last space encountered by a visitor. Probably because of its unique character, the Hall was used for a variety of purposes by visiting exhibition societies who reorganised, and often renamed, the space depending on their display priorities, thereby creating a fresh interpretation of the area each time.

At the summer exhibitions the Hall usually housed sculpture, but the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society displayed a variety of decorative artwork ranging from ceramics, to metalwork, needlecraft, and bookbinding within the space, all housed in display cases. (Figure 37) At the Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition of 1898/1899, the artist's larger tapestries hung from the Balcony so that that they adorned the Hall and filled it with colour, while at the Whistler Memorial Exhibition in 1905 a series of screens surrounded the central area in order to frame the space, these screens also serving to hang the artist's smaller works. (Figure 38) One of the most innovative uses of this space was during the Eastman Kodak exhibition in 1897 when the area was transformed into a market place, echoing the short period when it had functioned as such, with various stalls advertising and marketing photographic goods. (Figure 39) The

Royal Photographic Society continued to utilise this format when they began exhibiting at the New Gallery in 1900. The varied functions of the Central Hall will be analysed further in the subsequent chapters. Not only did each society utilise the space in a distinct way but each one also renamed it, thus formalising the way in which the Hall was continually repurposed.

Extending the Metaphor of the Palimpsest: The wider locale

The site in its entirety covered around one quarter of an acre and a critic from the *Observer* claimed that ‘the wall space provided in these two rooms [west and north] is thirty foot more than the Grosvenor, while the total superficial area of the building is more than half again.’⁷⁸ In addition to this rare wealth of space was the abundance of light that flooded into each of the exhibition areas, prompting high praise from the *Illustrated London News* as being ‘the best-lighted and most artistically decorated picture gallery in London’⁷⁹ The particular combination of space and light, together with the convenience of being based largely at ground floor level, produced a unique and adaptable latenineteenthcentury exhibition venue.

The distinctive interior of the New Gallery was captured by Hardwicke D. Rawnsley (1851-1920), a poet, clergyman, and conservationist, in a light-hearted sonnet dated 17 May, 1888. It is worth including here in full:

A Sonneteer at the New Gallery

Where all the air is vexed with hurrying feet
And angry traffic’s palpitating sound,
I passed a mystic portal, and I found
A home for silence sheltered from the heat.
Such home as Helen knew, the court was sweet
With Grecian voices; with a whispering sound

⁷⁸ ‘The New Gallery,’ *Observer*, 6 May 1888, 3.

⁷⁹ ‘The New Gallery,’ *Illustrated London News*, 12 May 1888, 501.

A fountain sprang, and, like tall trees, around
Cool marbles grew to keep the faun's retreat.

On through the stately palace court to halls
Fair built, fair pictured, gloriously designed
For contemplation moved the people by;
"And here," said they, "is deathless art enshrined
With earth's sure colours marbled on the walls,
O'erhead pavilioned with a fadeless sky."⁸⁰

Rawnsley retains the traditional iambic pentameter of the usual sonnet form and also presents two contrasting elements, the exterior and interior of the New Gallery, in order to examine the tension between the two. He opens the sonnet with reference to contemporary London, with hassled people and 'angry' traffic. After the first two lines the mood of the poem shifts to one of timelessness and serenity as the poet enters the doors of the gallery, seemingly by chance. Rawnsley alludes to the neo-classical architectural features of the space – the classical columns and the entrance portico – by mentioning 'Helen' and 'Grecian voices.' Throughout the sonnet there are references to the marble, both its colour and its quality of coolness, again evoking scenes from the classical world.

However, it is the phrase 'mystic portal' which is particularly striking, suggesting the otherworldly, spiritual interior of the gallery. The concept of entering an art gallery being a similar experience to entering a church or holy site is proposed by Brian O'Doherty in *Inside the White Cube* (first published 1976), where he argues that ritual spaces, such as art galleries, 'are symbolic reestablishments of the ancient umbilicus which, in myths worldwide, once connected heaven and earth.'⁸¹ Furthermore, he asserts that a gallery can 'eliminate awareness of the outside world' by creating a

⁸⁰ 'A Sonneteer at the New Gallery,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 May 1888, 14.

⁸¹ Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of Gallery Space* (California: University of California Press, 1999), 8.

powerful, absorbing space.⁸² Although he is referring to modern, white cube gallery space, O'Doherty's arguments are relevant to visitor experience at the New Gallery according to witnesses such as Rawnsley. Rawnsley emphasises the mythical quality of the Gallery with the phrase 'faun's retreat' and refers to 'deathless art,' suggesting the immortal nature of the contents of the spaces.

The New Gallery was one of many galleries in the late nineteenth century converging on the Royal Academy at Burlington Gardens. This area was inundated with galleries by 1888, as is illustrated in Pamela Fletcher's and Anne Helmreich's Digital Mapping Project of 2012.⁸³ Fletcher and Helmreich provide useful scholarship regarding the location and volume of art galleries in London and highlight the gradual relocation of commercial galleries from the area around Trafalgar Square to the environs of Burlington House, the home of the Royal Academy from 1867.⁸⁴ The majority of galleries settled on Bond Street, as is illustrated in the project: by 1875, four galleries were established here; by 1880 there were a further eight, and by 1885 yet another eight, leading Bond Street to be referred to as 'one elongated picture gallery templed by tea shops.'⁸⁵

This project, while providing valuable data, does have its limitations. Not only has it not been updated since 2012 but, in addition, the authors list the New Gallery as an exhibition society rather than a commercial gallery, defining the latter as 'a private and for-profit institution devoted to the exhibition and sale of fine art in a dedicated retail space'.⁸⁶ Yet Hallé makes clear in his autobiography that neither he nor Comyns Carr possessed private means, and that the New Gallery had to operate as a commercial enterprise.⁸⁷ Furthermore, Hallé required a gallery in which to exhibit and sell his own paintings, thereby furnishing him with additional income. Ironically, the Grosvenor is

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Pamela Fletcher & Anne Helmreich, with David Israel and Seth Erickson, 'Local/Global: Mapping Nineteenth-Century London's Art Market', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* Vol. 11, no. 3 (Autumn 2012), accessed 16 June 2023, <https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn12/fletcher-helmreich-mapping-the-london-art-market>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Hallé, *Notes*, 159.

listed as a commercial gallery, yet Coutts Lindsay strove to establish a venue which resembled a luxury country house full of aesthetically pleasing art works. He was 'particularly successful at masking its commercial underpinnings', preferring to leave financial queries to the gallery's secretary.⁸⁸ Ultimately it is likely that, because the New Gallery hosted a number of exhibition society shows, Fletcher and Helmreich label the space as a society rather than commercial gallery.

The clustering of galleries around the Royal Academy provided a particular tension. Many of these galleries had set up to challenge 'the sleepy self-complacency' of the Academy, yet chose to remain in close proximity.⁸⁹ This was largely because the market here was ready-made: people were already viewing and buying art, and as more new galleries were established here, or relocated from Pall Mall, more were attracted to join them. In addition, there were a number of Academicians looking for a plurality of opportunities; Leighton, Millais, Alma-Tadema, and Watts, for example, were amongst the growing number who exhibited both at the Academy as well as selecting alternative venues in order to gain a wider audience and attract new buyers. The importance of location for commercial purposes was crucial.

Exploring the choices of John William Waterhouse provides additional insights into how these artists used different locations to exhibit works which might succeed in one venue but not in another. In 1891 he exhibited two contrasting representations of the Odysseus myth at different galleries in London. At the Royal Academy, his *Ulysses and the Sirens* fulfilled all the requirements of a history painting, the most prestigious in the hierarchy of genres. A large action picture, full of figures, it catches the moment that Ulysses escapes the Sirens' song, and incorporates a series of strong diagonals to emphasize the dramatic movement. By complete contrast, Waterhouse's submission to the New Gallery, *Circe Offering the Cup to Ulysses* presents a sensuous, powerful sorceress who dominates the picture frame. Her naked female body is evident beneath the chiffon-like fabric, and the protagonist, Ulysses, like the viewer, shrinks below her

⁸⁸ Pamela Fletcher & Anne Helmreich, eds., *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London, 1850-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 51.

⁸⁹ J. Comyns Carr, *Eminent Victorians*, Chapter 10.

Amazonian form. Waterhouse's wide brush strokes and thin layers of striking blue paint give the impression of a more hastily executed work.

Waterhouse was an 'Academy' man. From his first acceptance at the Summer Exhibition in 1874 (*Sleep and his half-brother Death*) to his own death in 1917, he exhibited at least one large oil every year bar two, missing just 1890 and 1915. He was rewarded for his talent and persistence with election to Associate Academician in 1885, with full honours being awarded in 1895. However, the example above demonstrates how he was able to take advantage of the multiplicity of opportunities for exhibiting by selecting separate venues for paintings with different styles or subject matter.

The New Gallery was the first commercial art gallery on Regent Street and remained so until the Goupil Gallery relocated to Number 5 in 1893 from their previous premises on New Bond Street. Until then, the closest competition was Dunthorne's Gallery, established at 5 Vigo Street in 1880, although its sales focussed on prints and book publishing. By selecting a Regent Street location, the New Gallery marginally separated itself from the concentration of galleries in Bond Street where, with the exception of the Grosvenor which was purpose-built, the premises tended to be small in scale, usually the width of one shopfront, with a gallery on the ground or upper floor and storage space or offices on the other. Even the Grosvenor, with its double shopfront and three floors, could not compete with the unique combination of space and light on one level at the New Gallery.

The formation of Regent Street as an avenue of grand and commanding character was designed to create a new route from the Prince Regent's Carlton House on Pall Mall up to Regent's Park in the north. There is a wealth of literature on the planning, designs, and history of the New Street (as it was originally called) including Hermione Hobhouse on general history (*Regent Street: A Mile of Style*, 2008), John Summerson on the role of John Nash (*Life and work of John Nash, Architect*, 1966), Dana Arnold on the collaborative aspects of the build (*Rural Urbanism: London Landscapes in the Early Nineteenth Century*, 2005), and finally, Erika Rappaport on the place of Regent Street within the context of shopping in the West End (*Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the*

Making of London's West End, 2000). Today it is also regarded as 'one of the earliest and most important examples of town planning'.⁹⁰

Both visitors and local Londoners were struck with the beauty and grandeur of this new avenue, designed to emulate Rue de Rivoli in Paris. Henry Colman for example, a tourist to London in the 1850s, wrote to a friend about the experience of visiting Regent Street:

I think one of the most beautiful sights I have seen in London has been a ride down Regent Street, on the box seat of an omnibus.... the whole of this magnificent street seems converted into the hall of an oriental palace.⁹¹

In 1878, Edward Walford described Regent Street as 'full of handsome shops, and ... the very centre of fashion, [which] with its show of fine carriages, horses, and gay company, forms one of the most striking sites of the metropolis.'⁹² Regent Street offered beauty and exoticism, attracting both the wealthy shopper and the curious traveller.

Regent Street also found its way into contemporary literature, for example in Charles Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby*, where the author situates Lord Frederick Verisopht in 'a handsome suite of apartments in Regent Street,' indicating that the address was deemed grand enough for a young aristocrat.⁹³ Until the serious cholera outbreak of 1854, even Soho, on the east of the street, had been a reasonably fashionable area for the aristocracy, but after this time it became increasingly populated with immigrants, who found that rents for shops and rooms were affordable.

⁹⁰ City of London Conservation Area Directory: Regents Park, accessed 19 March 2020, <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/media/document/regents-park-conservation-area-directory>.

⁹¹ Henry Colman, *European Life and Manners; in Familiar Letters to Friends*, Volume One (Boston: Little, Brown, 1850), 120.

⁹² Edward Walford, 'Regent Street and Piccadilly,' *Old and New London: A Narrative of its History, its People and its Places*, Volume 4 (London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin, 1873), 250.

⁹³ Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1839), chapter 26.

The journalist George Augustus Sala (1828-1895) wrote extensively about Regent Street, living there on several occasions in the early and mid-nineteenth century. He specifically recalls number 121 in the time of Robert Newman's livery yard and recounts a day when:

I saw depart from Newman's a yellow post-chaise drawn by two grey horses. There were two gentlemen in the chaise, one of whom carried a shallow oblong case covered with dark shagreen. That post-chaise had nothing to do with an elopement, or a wedding breakfast, or a setting forth on a honeymoon - it was a chariot of death. I learned afterwards that the two gentlemen drove from Regent Street to Wimbledon, there to meet three other gentlemen, one of whom belonged to the medical profession. The party, in fact, consisted of two principals, two seconds, and a surgeon; and a duel was fought, and one of the gentlemen who had left Newman's that morning in the post-chaise was shot to death on Wimbledon Common.⁹⁴

The tales attached to Newman and his famous livery yard shaped the 'mythical value' of the historical context of the site, which Machado argues is part of the legacy which remains when an old building is remodelled.⁹⁵

Whereas Bond Street housed a number of small, exclusive shops such as Asprey from 1847 and Charbonnel and Walker, London's oldest chocolate shop, from 1875. Regent Street, by contrast, included a number of large, fashionable department stores. By 1888 this included Hamleys at numbers 64 to 66, Dickins and Smith (later Dickins and Jones) at 232 to 234, the Scotch Tartan Shop at 115, and perhaps most significantly, Liberty's. Established by Arthur Lazenby Liberty at 218a Regent Street in 1875, and with a focus on oriental furniture and fabrics, Liberty's was the destination for the aesthetic shopper, whilst also attracting the attention of Burne-Jones, Whistler and Rossetti.⁹⁶ In 1885 Arthur Liberty relocated to larger premises at numbers 142 to 144 and arranged

⁹⁴ George Augustus Sala, *London Up to Date* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1894), 213-256.

⁹⁵ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

⁹⁶ Hermione Hobhouse, *A History of Regent Street* (London: Macdonald & Jane's, 1975), 96.

the store into seven departments: silks, embroideries, furniture, carpets, porcelain, curios, and miscellaneous, even employing the celebrated architect, Edward William Godwin to direct a specialist costume outfitters.⁹⁷ Shoppers to Regent Street would easily have been able to experience a visit both to Liberty's and the New Gallery, often encountering similar designs and artefacts in both establishments. William Arthur Smith Benson (1854-1924), a founder member of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society who exhibited regularly at the New Gallery, set up his own lighting workshop which sold directly through Liberty's. These interchanges were characteristic of a number of establishments on Regent Street.

Yet despite the presence of grand, exotic stores such as Liberty's which attracted wealthy visitors, artists, and tourists, Regent Street continued to reveal traces of its previous layer as a socially and culturally downmarket and corrupt locale. From the outset Nash made it clear that Swallow Street formed 'the line of separation between the habitations of the first class of society, and those of inferior classes' and his aim was to move those 'inferior classes' further eastwards and so incorporate the new Regent Street into the smarter West End.⁹⁸ Machado asserts that in remodelling 'the past behaves as a representative mechanism', that the past is either accepted (maintained), transformed, or suppressed (refused).⁹⁹ In creating Regent Street, the Crown and London authorities intended to transform and suppress the old neighbourhood but were unable to completely eradicate the existing cultural fabric, creating an uneasy symbiotic relationship between the two.

The existence of this alternative social and cultural life bubbling just below the surface was particularly evident at the Quadrant (south) end. Here Regent Street originally featured a covered walkway running all the way along the Quadrant which, while visually dramatic and designed to protect shoppers from detrimental weather, in fact caused several problems. The colonnade not only blocked out most of the natural daylight from the shops, but also appeared to be a magnet for the prostitutes who had

⁹⁷ Alison Adburgham, *Liberty's: A Biography of a Shop* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1975), 42.

⁹⁸ Hobhouse, *Regent Street*, 23.

⁹⁹ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 49.

previously worked this area when it formed part of Swallow Street. Various contemporary writers give a picture of the types of people frequenting this patch in the evenings, including 'loungers of both sexes...the daughters of crime...the young men that saunter up and down, and the hoary old sinners.'¹⁰⁰ Although Albert Smith suggested that the 'lounger' in upper Regent Street was 'a better style of man than his neighbour in the Quadrant,' it was clear that many Londoners were alarmed at the presence of either sort.¹⁰¹ Despite the removal of the colonnade in August 1848, suspect behaviour continued as there was a concentration of depravity in the area.

It was at this end of Regent Street that the New Gallery was located, in the first block on the west beyond the Quadrant. Two other businesses based very close by were also connected to the rich artistic life of London, the Café Royal and the Bodley Head. The Café Royal was founded by Daniel Nichols (originally Daniel Nicholas Thévenon) and 'emerged as a significant symbolic site for artistic life.'¹⁰² By the 1880s the venue had become the special haunt of a number of literary and artistic figures including Whistler, George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Walter Sickert and Oscar Wilde. It was an informal, bohemian meeting ground with a vitality that appealed to the edgier, more flamboyant characters of the period and contributed to the character of Regent Street.¹⁰³ A painting by Sidney Starr (1857-1925) of the interior dates from this period. (Figure 40) Starr attended the Slade School of Fine Art where he was a pupil of Legros who, in turn, exhibited fifteen artworks at the New Gallery's first summer exhibition and twenty-eight at the second. Since the Café was a mere few minutes' walk across Regent Street from the Gallery, it is reasonable to suppose that there were many characters from this time who frequented both. Certainly, Oscar Wilde was another such figure. A regular at the Café Royal, he wrote 'The Close of the Arts and Crafts' for

¹⁰⁰ George W. M. Reynolds, *The Mysteries of London containing stories of life in Modern Babylon*, Volume 1 (London: Wildside Press, 2016 [1850]), 62.

¹⁰¹ Angus B. Reach, 'The Lounger in Regent Street,' in *Sketches of London Life and Character*, edited by Albert Smith (London: Dean, 1859), 116-123.

¹⁰² P. Brooker, *Bohemia in London: The Social Scene of Early Modernism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 28.

¹⁰³ See Guy Deghy and Keith Waterhouse, *Café Royal: Ninety Years of Bohemia* (London: Hutchinson, 1955) for a detailed account of the history of the Café Royal.

the *Pall Mall Gazette* after visiting the exhibition at the New Gallery in the autumn of 1888.

The Bodley Head, a publishing company founded by John Lane and Elkin Mathews in 1887, was based in Vigo Street. Now part of Random House, it is best remembered for the publication of *The Yellow Book* from 1894 to 1897, a notorious periodical which printed works by many leading artists and literary figures of the day. Aubrey Beardsley was the first art editor of the journal and encouraged artists such as John Singer Sargent and Walter Sickert to have their work reproduced on its pages, while writers including Henry James and Max Beerbohm lent their skills to articles and stories. A story published in the journal in January 1896 referred directly to the divisions between east and west on Regent Street. The author, Evelyn Sharp, described London in transition between medieval and modern in 'Dull Brown,' where the protagonist 'turned up Regent Street and made a cross cut through the slums that lie on the borders of Soho.'¹⁰⁴

Finally, just before the launch of the New Gallery in May 1888 there was a case of wrongful arrest in Regent Street that made headline news. On 28 June 1887, Elizabeth Cass, a twenty-four-year-old dressmaker, was arrested by PC Bowen Endacott for soliciting on Regent Street. Although she was cleared of any crime, there was an outpouring of press indignation at both the scandalous way she was treated as well as the assumption that any single woman walking in this area alone was a prostitute.¹⁰⁵ This case illustrates the delicate position of women on the streets of London, especially a street adjacent to Soho where the respectable and less respectable mingled freely.

Such was the colourful, multi-layered social and cultural environment of Regent Street in 1888. Machado's metaphor of the palimpsest reinforces the concept of layers, where subsequent strata do not necessarily erase all traces of those already in existence but

¹⁰⁴ Evelyn Sharp, 'Dull Brown,' *The Yellow Book: An Illustrated Quarterly*, Vol. 8 (January, 1896): 180-205.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example: 'The Police and the Public,' *Lloyd's Illustrated Newspaper*, 3 July 1887, 7; 'The Police Outrage in Regent Street,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 4 July 1887, 1; 'The Miss Cass Outrage,' *Aberdeen Journal*, 9 July 1887, 6.

simply create 'a new form of an old story.'¹⁰⁶ The interplay between the physical terrain and human activity on Regent Street provided a juxtaposition of respectability and wealth, depravity and poverty, art and literature. The singular identity of Regent Street in the late nineteenth century was crucial for the success of the New Gallery, which must be considered in relation to this surrounding urban landscape while also being evaluated as an independent site with a specific agenda.

That the interior and exterior spaces of the New Gallery were decisive factors in the success of the site as an exhibition venue are in no doubt. Machado's metaphor of the palimpsest has been used in this chapter to investigate the wider geographical locale with its symbiosis of wealth and poverty, to demonstrate how the original footprint of the early livery yard determined the later space of the New Gallery and to analyse and interpret Robson's interventions at this site. The building itself becomes central to an understanding of the place of the New Gallery within the London art world. The three previous layers (the Sadler's Arms Yard, Newman's Yard and the Provisions Market) all remained embedded in the physical, social and mythological histories of the site.

A Place of Convergence

Regent Street has thus far been posited as a divide between the wealth and splendour of Mayfair and the slums of Soho. Yet it can equally be viewed as a point of convergence between these two areas, with the site at 121 Regent Street providing a bridge from one physical and social space to another. It was at the New Gallery that people, ideas and artworks came together from wide-ranging backgrounds to forge a new set of standards and ideals. Hallé and Comyns Carr were both such figures. Hallé was the artist son of a German immigrant, Sir Charles Hallé (1819-1895), who founded the Hallé orchestra, while Comyns Carr was a writer and art critic from a large, middle-class family. They both had a myriad of connections to the worlds of music and theatre, while also claiming friendships with leading politicians, Presidents of the Royal Academy and a number of members of the aristocracy.

¹⁰⁶ Machado, 'Old Buildings,' 48.

One of Hallé's connections was with the dancer, Isadora Duncan (1877-1927), who met him on her second visit to London in 1900. He seems to have made a great impact on Duncan and was certainly helpful in promoting her dancing to wealthy and influential patrons. She describes him in her autobiography as having 'one of the most beautiful heads I have ever seen. Deep-set eyes under a prominent forehead, a classical nose and a delicate mouth, a tall, slender figure with a slight stoop, grey hair parted in the middle and waving over his ears, and a singularly sweet expression.'¹⁰⁷ He orchestrated a series of three evenings at the New Gallery in June and July 1900 where she danced to music and poetry recitals, or interpreted artworks through dance. As the entertainment was given royal patronage, through Princess Christian, one of Queen Victoria's daughters, the mix of guests must have been drawn from all levels of society.¹⁰⁸

Dancing in the Central Hall, wearing 'a few yards of veiling' which she had bought up the road at Liberty's, Duncan's dancing was generally admired, despite her not being classically trained. She writes at some length about the success of the venture, explaining that Hallé

introduced me to his friends Sir William Richmond, the painter, Mr. Andrew Lang, and Sir Hubert Parry, the composer, and each consented to give a conference, Sir William Richmond upon dancing in its relation to painting, Andrew Lang on dancing in its relation to the Greek myth, and Sir Hubert Parry on dancing in its relation to music. I danced in the central court, round the fountain, surrounded by rare plants and flowers and banks of palms, and these functions were a great success. The newspapers were enthusiastic and Charles Hallé was overjoyed at my success; every one of note in London invited me to

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Princess Christian (1846-1923), born Princess Helena of the United Kingdom, was the third daughter and fifth child of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. She married Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein in 1866. The couple remained in Britain for their married life.

tea or dinner and we had a short period during which fortune smiled upon us.¹⁰⁹

Curiously, Duncan is not mentioned in Hallé's autobiography. However, for a brief moment the Central Hall was transformed once again and the legend of Isadora Duncan's dancing became embedded into the history of the New Gallery. Her particular style of dance, described by a journalist in the *Lady* as a 'series of graceful poses like those of figures on a Greek vase, but passed from one to another so quickly that the succession of postures resolved itself into a dance,' seems to have been developed, in part, from her examination of Greek statues and artefacts at the British Museum.¹¹⁰ As such, it harmonised with the classical interior of the Central Hall and reflected the revived general interest in classical art and architecture in this period.

The notions of a place of convergence, of encounter across barriers and of intersections, are significant for the next chapter which investigates the relationship between the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and the New Gallery. The Society based itself at the New Gallery from its inception and exhibited at the venue consistently between 1888 and 1910, only departing because of the closure of the Gallery. The Society and its members represented a new type of art, with social and political ideals attached to both content and display in their exhibitions. For the first time, decorative and industrial art, formerly considered to be inferior to the art on display at public galleries and museums, was presented in the same way as high art and in a reputable West End art gallery. The distinctive, multipurpose spaces of the New Gallery, its location, locale and interior design, were entirely appropriate for a new society whose aims included breaking down the barriers imposed by institutions such as the Royal Academy.

¹⁰⁹ Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1927), chapter 7.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Nesta Macdonald, 'Isadora Reexamined,' *Dance Magazine* Vol. 51 (July 1977): 64.

Chapter 2: The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society at the New Gallery, 1888 – 1910

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), on the opening of the inaugural exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in October 1888, declared that ‘It has been for a long time past evident that the first step towards making our picture-galleries enduring is to get rid of the pictures.’¹ He continued his article in the *World* by claiming that ‘the beginning of the end of the easel-picture despotism is the appearance in the New Gallery of the handi-craftsman...[showing]...things in general that have some other use than to hang on a nail and collect bacteria.’² Shaw’s comments came at a time when the Royal Academy was subject to increasing criticism for excluding the lesser arts, with decorative and craft work considered particularly inferior. Although the popularity and awareness of decorative art had gradually increased throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, it was only with the founding of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1887 that this form of art was propelled to the forefront, not purely within Britain, but also finding a significance with a wider international audience.

It was the New Gallery which facilitated the visual display of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society’s ideals for a period of twenty-two years between 1888 and 1910, hosting eight of their nine London exhibitions and forming the longest, most consistent partnership between the gallery and an artists’ society.³ The relationship between the two was crucial to the success of the Society and it will be argued in this chapter that, without the New Gallery’s exhibition spaces, it is quite possible that the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society would not have survived. The chapter explores the twenty-two-year relationship between the two organisations to demonstrate how the location and

¹ George Bernard Shaw, ‘In the Picture-Galleries, Arts and Crafts,’ *World*, 3 October 1888, in *Bernard Shaw on the London Art Scene, 1885-1950*, edited by Stanley Weintraub (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 238.

² *Ibid.*

³ The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society held exhibitions in 1888, 1889, 1890, 1893, 1896, 1899, 1903 and 1910 at the New Gallery. In addition, they contributed to the Turin Exhibition of 1902. The Eighth Exhibition was held at the Grafton Gallery in 1906 as the New Gallery was not available.

singular interior layout of the gallery worked highly effectively for the Society. As such it is a complex chapter addressing not only changes and developments within the Society, but also the place of the Society within the wider art world and its connections to what became known as the Arts and Crafts Movement.⁴

Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks's theories concerning archaeology as palimpsest, addressed in the Introduction to the thesis, provide a focus for the analysis of documentary evidence from the exhibitions. This fragmentary evidence is pieced together to give a clear picture of the aims of the Society and the ways in which these were expressed through content and display in their exhibitions. Of crucial importance is the *Catalogue to the First Exhibition* of 1888, a radically diverse publication which included a lengthy Preface written by the first President, Walter Crane (1845-1915) and a series of essays written by members of the Society, together with particulars of all those involved both designing and executing the artworks. The catalogue will be examined and assessed in substantial detail before being set within the broader social, political and artistic contexts of the fin de siècle.

A further record of the Society's activities is a group of photographs taken by Emery Walker (1851-1933) on the opening of the Fifth Exhibition of 1896, and now held in the Heinz Archive and Library at the National Portrait Gallery. These images provide a compelling record of the ways in which objects were displayed physically within the spaces and the meanings created by specific placements and juxtapositions. Mike Pearson and Cliff McLucas's model of 'host' and 'ghost' provides a framework for the evaluation of the ways in which the spaces were altered through the temporary display at the Fifth Exhibition.⁵ Both the selection of objects and also the hierarchy of display are explored in order to underline the 'complex coexistence' of 'that which is *of* the site ... and that which is brought *to* the site.'⁶ In 1902 the Society took part in a major European exhibition of decorative arts in Turin, after which a number of changes were

⁴ The name of the Society was coined by T.J. Cobden-Sanderson in 1887 although the phrase 'Arts and Crafts Movement' did not appear until 1896 with the publication of Walter Crane's *Of the Decorative Illustration of Books Old and New* (London: G. Bell, 1896).

⁵ Mike Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 35.

⁶ *Ibid.*

made to the presentation of exhibits in their show at the New Gallery in 1903.⁷ In order to interpret and evaluate these adjustments, the Turin exhibition is first carefully examined to consider the ways in which other countries chose to display their objects, particularly when compared to the English section.

Before embarking on an analysis of the abundant evidence from the exhibitions outlined above, it is helpful to identify the motives behind the formation of the Society in 1887. The Society sought to contest the existing dominance of oil painting by refocussing artistic practice with decorative and craft work at its core. A major focus involved the organisation of annual exhibitions, the earliest surviving photograph of which is from the Third Exhibition of 1890. (Figure 37) The photograph is taken from the Balcony and shows the Central Hall looking towards the entrance of the North Room. This exhibition, as was the case with the others organised by the Society, was designed to showcase the work of members whilst also educating the public on the value of craft work, which included furniture, metalwork, tapestries, book illustration, ceramics and other media. For Walter Crane, William Morris (1834-1896) and others on the committee who were declared socialists, the exhibitions also provided an opportunity to promote a vision of equality by raising the social and intellectual status of decorative art so that craftworkers could be considered and valued on level terms with fine artists. With Crane and Morris holding the role of President between them from 1888 to 1912, their progressive and egalitarian aims inevitably had an influence on the formative years of the Society.⁸

The cycle of the exhibitions acted to continually reinforce the agenda of the Society, with each exhibition providing the opportunity to refer to the remodelled spaces of earlier shows. By drawing upon the 'complex package of interrelated repositories' which accumulated over the years, the Society was then able to 'to learn from, to copy, to transform' the repositories and develop new modes of display for subsequent

⁷ *First International Exposition of Modern Decorative Arts*, Turin, Italy, 1902.

⁸ Walter Crane was the first President from 1888 to 1891. William Morris succeeded him until his death in 1896 at which point Crane became President for the second time until 1912.

exhibitions.⁹ There is a strong sense that the first twenty-two years of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society ran in parallel with that of the New Gallery and that their development and success were inextricably bound. The Society was the first external organisation to hold an exhibition within the spaces and also the last, immediately before 121 Regent Street was refunctioned and remodelled to become a restaurant in 1910.

Although scholars have addressed the importance of the Society within broader publications on the Arts and Crafts Movement, there is no previous literature examining the specific relationship between the Society and the New Gallery. Gillian Naylor, for example, provides a thorough survey of sources and influences, focussing on the importance of the Art Workers' Guild and the inspiration of Henry Cole (1808-1882), John Ruskin (1819-1900) and William Morris.¹⁰ Both Peter Stansky and Imogen Hart devote a chapter to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in their respective publications, but neither draw out the particular relationship between the New Gallery and the Society to question how and why the two formed such a formidable partnership.¹¹ Yet this relationship was integral to the immediate and later success of the Society. The specific location of the Gallery, the versatility of its unique spaces and the supportive attitude of Hallé and Comyns Carr, should all be considered key factors in contributing to a flourishing association. After the Gallery closed in 1910 the Society struggled to find another regular venue or a consistent audience for its exhibitions. In 1911 the *Architectural Review* declared that the Society was 'now dead,' while the exhibition organised in 1912 (held at the new Grosvenor Gallery, 51a New Bond Street) made a financial loss.¹²

⁹ Rodolfo Machado, 'Old Buildings as Palimpsest,' *Progressive Architecture* Vol. 11 (1976): 48.

¹⁰ Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement: A Study of its Sources, Ideals and Influence on Design Theory*, (London: Trefoil Publications, 1971). See also Linda Parry, *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005) and Wendy Kaplan, ed., *The Arts and Crafts Movement in Europe and America* (Los Angeles: County Museum of Art, 2005).

¹¹ Peter Stansky, *Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). Imogen Hart, *Arts and Crafts Objects* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

¹² 'On the use and abuse of cast iron,' *Architectural Review*, 30 (November, 1911): 285. See Alan Crawford, 'United Kingdom: Origins and First Flowering,' in *The Arts and Crafts Movement in Europe and America*, edited by Wendy Kaplan for further information about the financial losses.

The symbiotic nature of the relationship becomes clear when examining the benefits to both Society and gallery. The New Gallery, at this point, had a very short history as an exhibition venue, having held just one summer exhibition of contemporary art earlier in the year. Its reputation was still forming, its spaces were fresh and its potential waiting to be explored. As a result of the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibition the gallery was launched to the forefront as a venue for new, radical ideas about art. Furthermore, the presence of prominent individuals including Crane, Morris and Burne-Jones, all of whom had already established a popular following throughout Europe and America, served to further promote the name and reputation of the venue. Yet it was partly by chance that the Society based itself at the New Gallery. In the Foreword to the *Catalogue of the Ninth Exhibition* of 1910, Crane explained that the 'difficulty of obtaining a gallery has always been a serious one, as an ordinary picture gallery is not the most suitable for our purposes...'¹³ As is recorded in the Minute Books, as well as in later essays written by founding members, the Grosvenor Gallery, Waterloo House, the Cadogan Hall and the Royal Albert Hall were all considered as possibilities during the discussions preceding the first exhibition.¹⁴

The Grosvenor Gallery would have been an obvious place to hold the first exhibition as the site had set itself up in opposition to the Royal Academy to promote original, contemporary art. Indeed a writer for the *Spectator* criticised the Grosvenor for failing 'to realise the expectations of those who saw the highest English art represented in the decorative work quite as distinctly as in the pictorial work of the school'.¹⁵ Although the committee had applied to the Grosvenor in March 1887, the reply from Sir Coutts Lindsay, while expressing his 'sympathy with the proposed Exhibition,' informed the

The new Grosvenor Gallery was established by P. & D. Colnaghi and M. Knoedler & Co. in October 1912, with Francis Howard as Managing Director. It closed briefly in 1920 before re-opening and operating until 1924.

¹³ *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Catalogue of the Ninth Exhibition* (London: Chiswick Press, 1910), 17.

¹⁴ W.A.S Benson, 'Origins of the A.C.E.S,' n.d. but before 1924, AAD 1980/1/22, Papers relating to the origins and aims of the Society of Designer-Craftsmen, Archive of Art and Design, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

¹⁵ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,' *Spectator*, 13 October 1888, 11.

committee that ‘the Grosvenor Gallery was not available for the purpose.’¹⁶ W.A.S. Benson later recorded that ‘before anything could be done the dispute over the conduct of that gallery and the separation of Messrs Carr and Hallé from its directive’ meant that it was not a viable option.¹⁷ The ultimate choice of 121 Regent Street was symbolically significant for the Society: as a remodelled light industrial site, refunctioned into a place of elegance for the specific purpose of exhibiting art, it fulfilled Crane’s comment above by not being ‘an ordinary picture gallery.’ Furthermore, the remodelled interior, as investigated in the previous chapter, was exceptional in the choice of marbles, gilding, glass and wooden flooring. This quality of craftsmanship resonated directly with the high quality of workmanship on display with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1888.

Catalogue of the First Exhibition: Overview and Preface

The *Catalogue of the First Exhibition* constitutes a tangible trace of the event. It survives in the Archive of Art and Design at the Victoria & Albert Museum and is also readily available digitally.¹⁸ (Figure 41) The responsibility of the Literary Committee, it was radically dissimilar to other exhibition catalogues of the time, such as those produced for the Royal Academy and the Grosvenor Gallery.¹⁹ The contents drove forward the agenda of the Society: a six-page Preface authored by Crane was followed with details of a lecture series which could be attended at reduced costs for arts and crafts workers. The names of the twenty-six committee members and those of fifty-one additional guarantors took up the subsequent three pages, while the bulk of the catalogue (pages seventeen to ninety-two) comprised ‘Introductory Notes,’ these being eleven essays on specific types of decorative art authored by committee members. This

¹⁶ ACES Minutes before 9 May 1888, AAD 1980/1/40, Minutes of the General Committee and its sub-committees, Society of Designer-Craftsmen, Archive of Art & Design.

¹⁷ W.A.S. Benson ‘Origins of ACES.’

¹⁸ The Archive of Art & Design at the Victoria & Albert Museum is currently closed during relocation from Blythe House to the Olympic Park. Full access will resume in 2024. I visited the archive on three occasions prior to closure between 2018 and 2020.

¹⁹ The Literary Committee comprised W.A.S. Benson, G. Somers Clarke, G.T. Robinson, J.D. Sedding and Emery Walker, with Walter Crane as Executive Officer.

was followed with catalogue notes and entries, and finally an index of all exhibitors, including both the executors of the work and the designers.

The Preface provides an invaluable insight into Crane's opinions on the art world and his vision of socialism, while also stating the aims of the Society. However, if the Preface is treated as an archaeological record which can be worked with as evidence of both the past event and the time in which that event took place, then its significance is furthered. A meticulous reading and analysis of content and style give an insight into the wider cultural and political condition of Britain during this period. Crane opens his essay by drawing attention to the inequality of the late nineteenth-century art world where the 'decorative artist and the handicraftsman' lack the opportunities of the painter of pictures.²⁰ He states that the aims of the Society include providing the 'opportunity of displaying their work in the public eye' in order to promote 'the humblest object' to the same sphere as the higher arts.²¹ These claims on the state of the arts formed a part of Crane's wider beliefs in socialism, particularly in equality for people of all classes, educational backgrounds and gender.

Late Victorian socialism included a range of political views ranging from Marxism to ethical socialism. The Reform Act of 1867 centred on raising the living standards of the poorest in the country, while various publications, including William Morris's *How We Live and How We Might Live* (1887), Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People* (1889) and Oscar Wilde's *The Soul of Man under Socialism* (1891) also drew on this particular aspect of the socialist movement. Crane wrote about his own journey to socialism in *An Artist's Reminiscences* where he describes his meeting Morris in 1871 as a pivotal moment, after which he 'accepted a Socialist position' which then directed his views on art and its position within the world.²² His membership included the Social Democratic Federation, The Socialist League and the Fabian Society. It is an important

²⁰ Walter Crane 'Preface,' *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Catalogue of the First Exhibition* (London: Chiswick Press, 1888), 5.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Walter Crane, *An Artist's Reminiscences* (London: Methuen, 1907), 253.

point that not all the committee were socialists, with only T. J. Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker joining Crane and Morris in being publicly committed to the cause.

Crane uses the Preface to discuss the wider state of the arts in the country and blames 'the modern industrial system' and a 'misapplication of machinery' for removing the individual, personal elements of creation. His views on industry and the use of machinery were connected to his condemnation of the drive for commerce and desire for wealth, which he argued could destroy the individual craftsman. Although these opinions found support in the figure of Morris, not all members of the Society were in agreement, with Lewis F. Day the most outspoken adversary. Day argued that he, as well as others on the committee, had 'no belief in reversing the current of industrial progress' as machines could be used to enhance craftwork if used properly.²³ The debates about the place of machines continued throughout the years that the Society was based at the New Gallery, creating a tension within the committee which remained unresolved.

Crane's condemnation of industry formed part of a wider drive for the moral development of the individual. Alan Crawford interprets this aspect of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society as 'a late episode in the history of Romanticism,' where joy in labour is rooted in a Romantic sense of the past, particularly in the medieval concept of the craftsman being free and creative because he is working with his hands.²⁴ The rejection of industrial progression, together with the criticism of the machine as soulless, repetitive and inhuman, reference the ideas of John Ruskin whose criticism of the Industrial Revolution was profoundly important to the Society. Ruskin's story of the Gothic stonemason in *Stones of Venice* (first published 1851-1852) portrays the protagonist disregarding industrial advancement for a simpler way of working truthfully with materials.²⁵ These were ideals that appealed to Morris and Crane, both of whom advocated a reversion to pre-industrial techniques with its emphasis on hand-crafted

²³ Walter Crane and Lewis F. Day, *Moot Points: Friendly Discussions on Art and Industry* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1903), 41.

²⁴ Alan Crawford, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain,' *Design Issues* Vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 24.

²⁵ John Ruskin, *Stones of Venice* (London: Smith, 1853).

objects. Like Ruskin, they believed in the ennobling power of craftsmanship and the capacity of creative work to regenerate society. This strong sense of social purpose was integral to the early days of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.

It is significant that Morris is the only individual to be referred to by name in the Preface. Eleven years Crane's senior, he clearly admired Morris and fundamentally agreed with his beliefs. Many saw Morris as the natural 'father' of the Arts and Crafts movement and by 1888 his name and designs were widely known in the public sphere, yet Morris had originally been extremely sceptical about the plausibility of staging a show of this sort. Although strongly supportive of publicity for craftsmen, he was concerned that 'the public don't care one damn about the arts and crafts' and thought that no one would attend the exhibition as a result.²⁶ These fears were held by others invited to take part in the exhibition, such as J. Hungerford Pollen (1820-1902). A writer and decorative artist, he had initially responded favourably to sitting on the committee and acting as guarantor. However, in a reversal of mind, which perhaps illustrates the potential risk of the venture, he withdrew his support on the grounds that 'to my mind I do not think it (the exhibition) will ever take place' and that the project was 'wasting time.'²⁷ In a further reversal of mind, he subsequently joined the committee for the First Exhibition and displayed six works on the Balcony.

In addition to evaluating the content of the Preface, the language is also worth consideration as it is clear that Crane's interests inform much of this with his references to Roman mythology, his use of wider religious metaphors and the incorporation of additional figurative language. While the choice of diction can be interpreted as reflecting his personal outlook, it may, too, be understood within the context of late-nineteenth century cultural life. His reference to 'Lares and Penates' would have been recognised by classical scholars, as well as admirers of the work and letters of Horace Walpole (1717-1797). Lares and Penates were Roman gods worshipped as guardians of

²⁶ Norman Kelvin ed., *The Collected Letters of William Morris*. Vol. 2. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 730.

²⁷ Letter from Hungerford Pollen to W.A.S. Benson, 19 January 1888, AAD 1980/1/14, Society of Designer-Craftsmen, Archive of Art and Design.

the home, maintaining balance and harmony within the family, while ensuring protection for all those who lived within. Walpole is credited with being the first to use the phrase colloquially, writing to the Reverend William Mason that he was 'returned to my own Lares and Penates – to my cats and dogs.'²⁸ Crane, like Walpole, draws a link between the Roman gods and domestic objects, although Crane's are the 'familiar things' which contribute to everyday comfort: chairs and tables, fabrics and wallpapers.'²⁹

Crane's comparison serves to raise the status of these everyday objects to that of gods: powerful, immortal, to be revered and admired. Like the household gods in Ancient Rome, these crafted objects are essential domestic items, yet, like the gods, they are also elite and hold singular powers. The allusion to deity is further extended in Crane's description of house decoration in 1888 as 'almost a religion,' indicating a zealous enthusiasm evident in some of those redecorating their homes. These spiritual and religious references reinforced the concept that a certain mystery and awe surrounded the objects on display at the exhibition. His use of metaphor is especially persuasive in the analogy of the tree, with particular emphasis on the importance of the root. Crane's assertion that the 'true root and basis of all Art lies in the handicrafts' is further qualified by arguing that 'it is little good nourishing the tree at the head if it is dying at the root,' comparing the state of art in England to the dying tree. The implicit criticism is of the money and effort put into fine art exhibitions at the Royal Academy, leaving the work of the craftsman to flounder.

Such language must have astounded many readers of the catalogue. Crane appears to be addressing the well-educated and academics, perhaps trying to prompt them into challenging the accepted supremacy of fine art over decorative art. The use of a catalogue for promoting the political and social motives of an exhibition society was unprecedented, although Crane's views had been aired shortly before the exhibition

²⁸ Horace Walpole, letter to William Mason, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Yale Edition, Volume 28, 225, 25 October 1775, accessed 11 July 2023, <http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/page.asp?vol=28&page=225>.

²⁹ Crane, 'Preface,' *Catalogue to the First Exhibition*, 6.

opening in an interview with the *Pall Mall Gazette* helpfully entitled 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition: What it is and what it is for.'³⁰ As a result, no visitor to the Gallery could possibly have been unaware of the specific agenda driving the exhibition forward. In the interview, Crane expressed his certainty that the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society would become accepted as *the* authority on decorative art in the near future.³¹

Catalogue of the First Exhibition: Essays

The eleven essays included the Catalogue covered a wide range of topics: textiles, decorative painting and design, wall papers, fictiles (pottery), metal work, stone and wood carving, furniture, stained glass, table glass, printing and bookbinding. These essays were designed to be instructive on several levels: teaching the public about the processes involved, informing students on good practice, and broadening an understanding of other forms of decorative art to practising craftsmen. The opening essay was written by Morris on his chosen subject of Textiles. In addition to discussing technical aspects of carpet and tapestry weaving, Morris used the essay as an opportunity to convey his vision of the independent craftsman compared to those working in factories in the manufacture of goods. He argued for the value of traditional methods of weaving which had been in existence since the fourteenth century and claimed that 'the mechanically-made carpets of to-day must be looked on as makeshifts for cheapness' sake.'³² He encouraged the examination of exemplar objects and suggested that the viewer visit the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria & Albert Museum) to 'study the invaluable fragments of the stuffs of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries of Syrian and Sicilian manufacture.'³³ These models were not only 'beautiful' but also had a 'richness and effect of design' that set a standard to which contemporary craftsmen could aspire.³⁴

³⁰ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition: What it is and what it is for,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 29 September 1888, 5.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² William Morris, 'Textiles,' *Catalogue of the First Exhibition*, 20.

³³ Morris, 'Textiles,' 22.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

The concept of setting an example from which to work recalls Henry Cole's mission as Director of the South Kensington Museum of educating the visitor by displaying objects that were considered of excellent design.³⁵ In 1852 he had gone one step further by organising an exhibition entitled *Examples of False Principles in Decoration*, held at the Museum of Ornamental Art, Marlborough House.³⁶ Although many of the original exhibits are now lost, the Victoria and Albert Museum recently identified a number of the objects, including a convolvulus gas fitting. (Figure 42) Nicknamed the 'chamber of horrors' by *The Times*, Cole attempted to show how good taste could also be learned by presenting what was bad to the viewer.³⁷ Crane, some thirty-seven years later, wrote of the importance of the public understanding 'the difference between false and the true, and recogniz[ing] a thing of beauty,' although he did not go quite as far as Cole to draw a comparison between the two.³⁸

Many of the other essays, as well as explaining technical aspects of the work, also gave a historical background to the crafts, strongly suggesting that earlier traditions should be revived rather than ignored. Somers Clarke, for example, in his essay on stone and wood carving, reproached modern workers whose aim was for 'Novelty rather than improvement,' claiming that this could wreck design and craftsmanship.³⁹ All the essays were written in an informal, conversational style, making them accessible to a wide variety of readers. The focus on the history of specific crafts and the appreciation of honest, hand-made objects, was balanced with the encouragement to look to a better future by incorporating such objects into the home.

³⁵ Julius Bryant, *Creating the V&A* (London: Lund Humphries in association with V&A Publishing, 2019), 9.

³⁶ The Museum of Manufacturers was renamed the Museum of Ornamental Art in 1853. The collection moved to the South Kensington Museum in 1857.

³⁷ 'Museum of Ornamental Art,' *The Times*, 6 September 1852, 4.

³⁸ Walter Crane, 'The Arts and Crafts,' *Murray's Magazine: A Periodical for the General Reader*, Vol. 6, Issue 35 (November 1889): 655.

³⁹ Somers Clarke, 'Table Glass,' *Catalogue of the First Exhibition*, 76, note 1.

The Case of Kate Faulkner

The most innovative step in the catalogue was the insistence on naming all workers involved in design and execution, including those working within large firms, in a move to elevate the standing of craft makers. The *Pall Mall Gazette* quickly picked up on this and commented that 'There is no existing exhibition of art which gives an opportunity to the designer and the craftsman as such to show their work under their own names, and give them at least a chance of the attention and applause which are now generally monopolised by the pictorial artist.'⁴⁰ This lack of 'attention' and 'applause' had direct financial implications on the workers. If they were not acknowledged, it was difficult for them to build individual reputations and gain commissions. However, two major firms, Gillow's, and Collinson and Lock, refused to name their craftsmen and therefore did not take part in the exhibition. It was not a policy that was liked by all.

Morris appeared ambivalent to this aspect of the Committee's plan, a further illustration of the underlying clash of views within the group of organisers. He maintained that the work of art itself was as significant as the artist who made it and declared that 'If I had my way there should be no names at all.'⁴¹ However, the emphasis on naming was particularly important for those workers who had not previously received recognition, many of them women. Women had been marginalised both in terms of exhibiting opportunities and membership of societies connected to the Arts and Crafts Movement. Zoe Thomas, in *Women Art Workers and the Arts and Crafts Movement*, addresses this issue, identifying that the Art Workers' Guild, established in 1884 and a precursor to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, closed its doors to women until the second half of the twentieth century.⁴² By contrast, women were able to act as guarantors to Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society from the outset, this being the earliest form of membership, although the first woman was not appointed to the committee until 1903 when May Morris – William Morris's daughter - was elected.

⁴⁰ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 10 May 1888, 10.

⁴¹ 'Art, Craft and Life: A Chat with William Morris,' *Daily News Chronicle*, 9 October 1893.

⁴² Zoe Thomas, *Women Art Workers and the Arts and Crafts Movement* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

An analysis of the press response to one object exhibited by a woman artist in 1888 gives a clearer picture of how assumptions or ignorance resulted in inaccurate and unclear reporting. Since one of the primary aims of the Society was to correctly acknowledge the makers and designers at the exhibition, it is ironic that, despite the Catalogue entries being correct, the press's interpretation of the information meant that the public could be misinformed. This was certainly the case with Kate Faulkner's (1841-1898) exhibit of a decorated Broadwood Grand Piano in the North Room, now on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.⁴³ (Figure 43)

Faulkner was a talented designer and craftsperson who worked closely with Burne-Jones, Morris and Philip Webb on a variety of commissions ranging from wallpapers and fabrics, to tiles and pieces of furniture. Her brother, Charles (1833-1892) was one of the founding members of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Company when it was established in 1861. He had met Morris and Burne-Jones at Oxford and quickly became a close friend of both. On the death of his father, Charles brought his sisters Kate and Lucy, together with their mother, to live with him at 35 Queen Square in London, just around the corner from the Morrises at number 26. They formed part of a small, tightly knit group of artists and families, who both worked and socialised together.

By 1888 Kate Faulkner was not only an established designer of smaller decorative works, but she had also completed commissions for the gesso decoration of four Broadwood grand pianos, one of which was the one on display at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1888.⁴⁴ This particular piano formed a commission from Alexander Ionides in 1883 for his drawing room at 1 Holland Park and was accurately listed in the catalogue under Faulkner's name (Figure 44). The entry provided additional information that the 'Decoration in gesso [was] designed and executed by Miss Kate

⁴³ The research on Kate Faulkner forms part of a conference paper which I gave at the Pre-Raphaelite Sisters: Making Art Conference, 12 – 13 December 2019, at the University of York.

⁴⁴ Kate Faulkner worked on five Broadwood pianos: for Amelia (née Graham) and Kenneth Muir Mackenzie, 1880/1, now at the Birmingham Museums; for Wickham and Elizabeth Flower, 1883, auctioned in 1913 and present whereabouts unknown; Ionides piano, 1883, now at the V&A; for Agnes (née Graham) and Herbert Jekyll, 1884, sold in 1894 to the Emir of Kabul, present whereabouts unknown; for William Knox D'Arcy at Stanmore Hall, now in the collection of Andrew Lloyd-Webber.

Faulkner.⁴⁵ Yet a large number of press reviews attributed the work (or at least the design element) to Burne-Jones, whose name was not even included in the Catalogue in relation to the piano. It is correct that Burne-Jones had worked with Broadwood to modify the design of grand pianos and this indeed was one that was built to those modifications. However, the decorative element was carried out entirely by Faulkner.

A careful analysis of the response to Faulkner's exhibit demonstrates how assumptions made by the press could be wholly inaccurate. This information reveals not only how the work was received and interpreted but also provides an indication of the difficulties of lesser-known artists being recognised and given the prominence they deserved.

Michael Shanks encourages an active interpretation of traces of past events in order to 'clarify the meaning and significance of something, deciphering and translating the past in the present.'⁴⁶ The interpretation of Faulkner's experience at the exhibition can be used to reveal the complex issues underlying the position of women artists in the late Victorian era. Despite all those involved in executing the work on display being fully acknowledged in the Catalogue, the press largely wrote about the well-known, established artists who took part in the exhibition. Undoubtedly there were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the well-known names (such as Burne-Jones and Crane) attracted attention and had the potential to increase readership of the various publications. Furthermore, critics were not necessarily art experts themselves and with over five hundred objects on view it might have been natural to focus on those works of art executed by artists with familiar names. This ambivalence or ignorance by the press demonstrates the challenge for the Society in breaking with tradition and forging new ground. Examined together, the Catalogue and press reviews build a more complete narrative of the exhibition and set it within an extended context.

Reviews of the exhibition reveal that Faulkner's name was often missing in discussions about the piano and that when her name was included there was a certain level of ambiguity about her role. There were some journals, such as the *British Architect*, which highlighted the piano as 'one of the most striking exhibits,' and explained clearly

⁴⁵ *Catalogue of First Exhibition*, 142.

⁴⁶ Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks, *Theatre/Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2001), 11.

that the design and execution 'of the beautiful decoration in gesso upon the case, front and cover of the instrument, are entirely Miss Kate Faulkner's, whose artistic invention and skill have not been limited to pianos.'⁴⁷ However, there were other reviews in which the syntax caused confusion, such as that in the *Standard* which referred to 'Mr Jones' design, and Miss Kate Faulkner's work,' or the *Manchester Guardian* in which the piano was described as 'executed by Miss Kate Faulkner from the designs of Mr Burne-Jones,' or the *Lady* whose writer referred to 'the grand piano made by Broadwood from a design by Burne-Jones, and decorated by Miss Kate Faulkner in gesso.'⁴⁸ In all of these reviews it is not quite clear to what, or to whom, the word 'design' is referring. The *Athenaeum* was full of praise for the instrument, calling its decorations 'superb,' but they incorrectly attributed the entire work to Burne-Jones, with no mention of Faulkner.⁴⁹ As a result of this misattribution and other misleading reviews such as the ones listed above, Burne-Jones wrote to the *Athenaeum* to correct their mistake and to state clearly that his contribution was 'only in the general design of the woodwork.'⁵⁰ The misinformation in the press, together with the printed information in the Catalogue, provide a fuller picture of the complications in trying to enforce this aspect of the Society's rules and ideals.

Even today the label at the Victoria and Albert Museum remains ambiguous. (Figure 45) While Burne-Jones's name is in large, bold letters at the top, Faulkner's name appears far less significant. As has already been argued, while it is not incorrect to state that Burne-Jones designed the piano – he did indeed develop the shape and structure of the instrument - the implication is that Faulkner simply carried out the gesso work to Burne-Jones's designs.

⁴⁷ 'A Grand Piano at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition,' *British Architect*, Vol. 30, no. 21 (November, 1888: 362.

⁴⁸ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,' *Standard*, 4 October 1888, 2; 'Arts and Crafts and the New Gallery,' *Manchester Guardian*, 1 October 1888, 5; 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,' *Lady*, 4 October 1888, 303.

⁴⁹ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,' *Athenaeum*, 6 October 1888, 454.

⁵⁰ 'Fine-Art Gossip,' *Athenaeum*, 13 October 1888, 489.

First Exhibition: Display Strategies

Faulkner's piano was on display in the North Room and although there are no visual documents of this exhibition, a photograph of the Fifth Exhibition in 1896 showing a harpsichord in the West Room gives some idea of how the piano might have looked amongst other objects. (Figure 46) The piano may well have been placed on a stand in a similar way to the presentation of the harpsichord. It was the responsibility of the Selection Committee to plan and execute the scheme of display at the exhibitions, both of which presented particular challenges during the first few exhibitions, partly because there was no precedent for this type of show. Previously decorative work had been shown only at the big international trade fairs such as the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the International fairs of the 1860s and 1870s. The fairs were vast, strongly commercial enterprises where companies could buy a space over which they had complete control in terms of display and content. The International Fair of 1862, for example, hosted approximately 29,000 exhibitors from thirty-six countries, with many exhibits focussing on advancements made in manufacturing and industry since the Great Exhibition.⁵¹ Within this context there were some limited opportunities for decorative artists to take part.

Morris, Marshall & Faulkner took two stalls at the International Fair in 1862 at a cost of twenty-five pounds and were based in the Medieval Court, part of an area devoted to British exhibitors of Class Thirty, comprising furniture, paper-hangings and decoration. (Figure 47) The Medieval Court was an enclosed space approximately fifty feet square, the overall presentation of which was devised by William Burges (1827-1881) and William Slater (1819-1872) on behalf of the Ecclesiological Society.⁵² However, perhaps because a number of exhibitors - such as Morris - had already been allocated spaces before the Ecclesiological Society assumed control, the resulting display was

⁵¹ The International Fair of 1862 took place beside the gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society in South Kensington, a site which now houses the Natural History and Science Museums.

⁵² The Ecclesiological Society was founded in 1839 as the Cambridge Camden Society. They were supporters and promoters of Gothic and church architecture.

overcrowded and caused confusion. The *Illustrated London News* criticised the 'effect of so many of such objects crowded together' as 'rather bewildering.'⁵³

The Ecclesiological Society distanced itself from Morris's exhibits with a writer for the Society's journal, the *Ecclesiologist*, disapproving of the painted furniture so vehemently that he described it as 'simply preposterous.'⁵⁴ However, Morris's firm, whose objects on display included wallpapers, embroideries, furniture, tiles and stained glass, gained substantial recognition for which they were awarded two gold medals. In accordance with the Fair's governance all their goods were for sale; one critic was struck with the enthusiasm the team had for promoting their objects to passers-by, which was carried out 'in the most unblushing, business-like manner.'⁵⁵ The commercial zeal of Morris' firm in 1862 was diametrically opposite to the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society which, from the start, was 'not organised to make a profit'⁵⁶ The anxiety surrounding the commercial aspects of their exhibitions remained a divisive issue within the Society although certain changes were made after 1890 which created a more commercial footing for those exhibiting.

In contrast to the international trade fairs no fees were incurred by exhibitors at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society shows. However, this also meant that, in line with traditional fine art shows, the Selection Committee had the final decision about which works were chosen and how these works were to be positioned and, therefore, interpreted by the viewer. Potential exhibitors were invited to take part in a 'projected exhibition [which] will occupy entirely new ground, with distinct aims, and objects differing from those of any existing society or association of exhibitions.'⁵⁷ The list of invitees included individual artists, the full membership of the Art Workers' Guild and selected firms and societies, all of whom were required to send in examples of work.

⁵³ 'The Medieval Court at the International Exhibition,' *Illustrated London News*, 27 September 1862, 351.

⁵⁴ *Ecclesiologist* Vol. 23 (1862): 171.

⁵⁵ *Parthenon* Vol. 23 (October 4, 1862): 724.

⁵⁶ Walter Crane, 'The Arts and Crafts,' *Murray's Magazine: A Periodical for the General Reader* Vol. 6, no. 35 (Nov. 1898): 656.

⁵⁷ Selection Committee letter to potential exhibitors, AAD 1980/1, Society of Designer Craftsmen, Archive of Art and Design.

For the first time there was to be an exhibition of decorative art with a selective display which carried the prestige of the Royal Academy.

E.R. Robson sent the New Gallery plans to the Selection Committee in 1888 so that some forward planning could be done, although it is clear that the Committee encountered difficulties from the start.⁵⁸ The principal issue was the question of how to present such a large volume of work of different media, size and function, particularly with a view to creating a coherent display. The complexity of this issue was alluded to by Crane in the Preface where he stated that organising an exhibition of decorative arts was far less straightforward than organising an exhibition of pictures.⁵⁹ The Committee pre-allocated the majority of the space, particularly for the larger furniture, tapestries and cartoons, so that 'the principal features had been decided,' but it was 'difficult to settle the arrangement of smaller works satisfactorily.'⁶⁰ It was agreed to place works by the same artist together as far as possible, whilst also grouping according to 'kind' of work. However, where this was not possible, the default position was 'to make the most harmonious arrangement in decorative effect, and with a view to placing each work after its kind in positions which would best explain their purpose.'⁶¹ The overall display was therefore aesthetically driven while the purpose of each object was sometimes left to be interpreted by the viewer. Throughout the history of the exhibitions there were disagreements 'over whether part or whole should be prioritised at the ACES,' which Imogen Hart suggests ultimately caused the resignation of Lewis F. Day in 1903.⁶²

The catalogue for 1888 gives some indication of the policy of arranging works by one artist in close proximity. In the West Room, for example, there was a group of thirteen works, numbered consecutively, by the furniture designer and decorative artist, John Aldam Heaton (1830-1897). These ranged from a marquetry panel to a wallpaper

⁵⁸ Reports of the Selection Committee, AAD 1980/1/42, Society of Designer-Craftsmen, Archive of Art and Design.

⁵⁹ Crane, 'Preface,' *Catalogue of the First Exhibition*, 8.

⁶⁰ Reports of the Selection Committee, AAD 1980/1/42, Society of Designer-Craftsmen, Archive of Art and Design.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Hart, *Arts and Crafts Objects*, 169.

design and an Axminster carpet, with all executors of the designs listed in accordance with the guidelines of the Society.⁶³ Grouping the works by artist presented a particular narrative, in this case a way of highlighting Heaton's versatility and skill in designing for a wide variety of media. The alternative grouping, by 'kind' of work, was particularly evident in the North Room which held an extensive collection of cartoons for stained glass by a wide variety of artists including Walter Crane, Lewis F. Day, Frederick J. Shields, Ford Madox Brown, Henry Holiday and Edward Burne-Jones. Presented in this way, the viewer was able to compare the same type of work by a number of different artists.

First Exhibition: Lecture Series

A central feature of the exhibitions took the form of a series of evening lectures, an aspect of the exhibition which had been deemed vital from the earliest discussions. Five lectures took place on consecutive Thursday evenings at 8.30pm in the North Room, creating an opportunity for an audience to attend a live performance given by the experts. For the opening lecture Morris spoke on the subject of Tapestry and this was followed with George Simonds on Modelling and Sculpture, Emery Walker on Letterpress printing, Cobden-Sanderson on Bookbinding, and finally Crane delivered his lecture on Design, together with the Presidential address. George Bernard Shaw wrote of the enormous popular appeal of the lecture series, which grew each week so that the pavement on Regent Street was blocked with a queue and 'Mr. Walter Crane's audience overflowed in all directions.'⁶⁴

The use of the North Room as the location of the lectures is worth some consideration. It was not only the marginally larger space but also the one dominated by work of the Society's committee members. Although only seven of the members were represented in here, their work amounted to sixty-one of the one hundred and forty-six objects on display, signifying nearly fifty percent of the total. Crane displayed twenty-seven pieces, while Burne-Jones exhibited fourteen, and there were several each from Heywood

⁶³ *Catalogue of the First Exhibition*, 102.

⁶⁴ Shaw, 'Last Lecture at the Craneries,' *Star*, 30 November 1888, in *Shaw on the London Art Scene*, 252.

Sumner, N.H. Westlake, Lewis F. Day, Mervyn Macartney and Morris. This created the sense that the North Room was 'almost exclusively devoted to artists of reputation' and therefore the most significant space.⁶⁵ For one evening each week the room was reconfigured on a temporary basis, rendering additional meaning to the space and the objects within it. Where, during the day, the room's purpose was to present individual objects as high status works of art and to educate the viewer in beauty, purpose and best practice, during the evening lectures the space was reactivated to create an additional layer of narrative. Pearson and McLucas's model of 'host' and 'ghost' can be used to draw attention to the multi-layered narrative created as a result of the lectures, where the 'host' of the New Gallery - its walls, wooden floor, huge rooflight and red walls - remained in situ, but the 'ghost' became double-layered: the exhibition of arts and crafts objects was reorganised to create space for a fresh performance, that of the lectures. The room was not only remodelled – with large pieces of furniture moved, chairs placed for seating and a small stage erected - but also refunctioned as an arena for live performance and entertainment, albeit with a specific pedagogical aim.

Pearson maintains that 'Performance recontextualises such sites: it is the latest occupation of a location at which other occupations...are still apparent and cognitively active.'⁶⁶ Rather than walking through the exhibits, attendees were now seated or standing at the back of the room. All faced the same direction, that of the stage, where the focus was on the speakers with their instructional visual aids. Attention was therefore directed away from the walls of the room causing the objects of the exhibition to become periphery to the vision of the visitor. The space became a place of education, intellectual debate and entertainment where visitors could gain additional insights into the history of craft work and the creation of crafted objects. Pearson explains that 'the public is an active agent...they may leave with different versions of the event having chosen what is significant and why.'⁶⁷

⁶⁵ 'The New Gallery,' *The Times*, 29 September 1888, 6.

⁶⁶ Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance*, 35.

⁶⁷ Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance*, 37.

Kate Flint argues that during the nineteenth century spectators developed a new perspective through the many popular visual demonstrations that were available to the public.⁶⁸ The demonstrations provided 'new positions of spectatorship' where what had previously been hidden from view, and perhaps from interpretation, was brought to the surface.⁶⁹ She asserts that the Victorians were particularly curious as to how things worked and that, in order to demystify the world around them and to satisfy this curiosity they attended educational events, especially those with an element of visual and practical demonstration. The lectures held by Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society satisfied this need. Visitors were given the opportunity to learn about a wide variety of materials while also watching the processes involved in making arts and crafts objects. Rather than merely viewing the finished products on display, whether a tapestry, a book or a piece of silverware, viewers were given a privileged insight into how a skilled craftsman created the work from beginning to end. What had previously been invisible to the eye and the mind was now made plainly visible.

Visitors to the gallery would have been familiar with the concept of attending public lectures as there were a number of talks and demonstrations organised at this time in London. The Royal Institution, for example, founded in 1799, had a long history of providing lectures with visual presentations although these tended to be on the subject of science or technology. They, too, were strongly educational in intent, designed to provide access to up-to-date scientific knowledge and new technologies. These lectures captured the public imagination by providing drama and entertainment, as is demonstrated in a caricature by James Gillray which illustrates a Royal Society lecture on pneumatics. (Figure 48)

The Royal Academy boasted a dedicated lecture room for students but this was separate to the galleries containing paintings and sculpture. The British Museum, by contrast, provided walking tours of its exhibits with an expert guide. A contemporary image shows one such guide, probably the classical scholar, Jane Harrison (1850-1928),

⁶⁸ Kate Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Chapter 1.

⁶⁹ Flint, *Victorians and Visual Imagination*, 9.

leading visitors through the rooms using her knowledge of Classics to explain the historical artefacts. (Figure 49) Harrison combined these tours with lectures which were held on the stage of the Archaeological Museum. Her reputation for creating dramatic performances ‘lavishly illustrated with up-to-the-minute lantern slides’ captivated an audience that was just as keen to learn as to be entertained.⁷⁰

At the New Gallery the lectures introduced a novel element: they were held within the exhibition space itself, rather than in a separate lecture room. The audience were, therefore, surrounded by the artworks and objects while listening to and watching the speaker in a true fusion of the visual and auditory. The purpose of the lectures was comprehensively laid out on page twelve of the catalogue: firstly, that they should reinforce ‘the aims of the Society’ and secondly that ‘by demonstration and otherwise [they should] direct attention to the processes employed [and] lay a foundation for a just appreciation both of the processes themselves and of their importance as methods of experience of design.’⁷¹ Consequently, the lectures acted as a vehicle to reinforce both the philosophy of the Society, with its dominant political and social message, together with an authoritative pedagogical remit.

The lectures themselves are not extant in written form but both Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw conveyed much of the content, as well as the way in which they were delivered, in reviews printed in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *World* and the *Star*. The speakers were experts in their particular field and used a plethora of visual material, including three-dimensional objects, live blackboard sketching and magic lantern displays, whilst also demonstrating the craftmaking to the audience as far as possible. This latter gave rise to the well-known sketch of Morris at the loom by Burne-Jones, now at the William Morris Gallery. (Figure 50) In the caricature, Morris is depicted totally absorbed in his work with his back to the audience, seemingly unaware that they are watching. His clothes, which include a waistcoat, shirt, trousers and a pair of hobnail boots convey the image of a country artisan.

⁷⁰ Mary Beard, *The Invention of Jane Harrison* (Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 55.

⁷¹ *Catalogue of the First Exhibition*, 12.

Oscar Wilde attended the complete lecture series and his detailed reviews provide an evocative picture of the five evenings at the New Gallery.⁷² Wilde congratulated Crane and Cobden-Sanderson (as Secretary of the Lectures) on organising the series and suggested that they would be highly influential on those who attended.⁷³ He was largely supportive and complimentary, with criticism reserved only for George Simonds's lecture on sculpture which he deemed 'too elementary' in content for the student, while 'too elaborately technical' for the ordinary layman for whom it may have been rather boring.⁷⁴ However, it was the delivery of the lecture that drew his particular criticism as he felt it lacked charm and engagement.

Morris's lecture on Tapestry, by contrast, was 'interesting and fascinating' and his use of visual aids kept the attention of the audience throughout.⁷⁵ Morris placed small working models of two looms, one for carpets and the other for tapestry weaving, against a backdrop of a fourteenth-century Flemish tapestry and a Persian carpet dating to the early seventeenth century. He used the hangings to discuss dyes, colour and design. Morris gave an explanation of the history of tapestries but, to Wilde, the outstanding feature of the lecture was the way that Morris delivered it as an entertaining performance. His relating of 'some delightful stories' about tapestries in Egyptian tombs, for example, captivated the listeners.⁷⁶ Morris also used the opportunity to state his views on the current state of art in England, attacking 'commercialism' with 'its vile god cheapness'.⁷⁷

Emery Walker's lecture on Printing and Printers incorporated a wealth of visuals including the use of a magic lantern. Walker displayed a series of images of old books and manuscripts through the magic lantern and followed this with a practical demonstration and explanation of block printing. Wilde clearly appreciated the

⁷² Oscar Wilde's articles were published each Friday in November in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

⁷³ Oscar Wilde, 'Mr. Morris on Tapestry,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 November 1888, 6.

⁷⁴ Wilde, 'Sculpture at the Arts and Crafts,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 9 November 1888, 3.

⁷⁵ Wilde, 'Mr. Morris,' 6.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

intellectual aspect of the lecture, mentioning details of several of the books on display including a 'superb Plautus printed at Florence in 1514 for Lorenzo de Medici' and 'a page out of John of Apier's edition of Cicero's letters.'⁷⁸ Stansky argues that Walker's lecture was 'the most important given in connection with the exhibition' as it led to Morris's founding of the Kelmscott Press with Emery Walker in 1891, a publishing company devoted to the replication of fifteenth century printing techniques.⁷⁹

Both Wilde and Shaw rated Cobden-Sanderson's lecture extremely highly. Again, it was the combination of delivery and expert knowledge that drew particular praise, with Shaw recalling Cobden-Sanderson's 'uncommonly clever and well-acted impersonation of the ideal craftsman invented by the guild' as 'bringing the house down.'⁸⁰ The lecture was essentially a practical demonstration, with Cobden-Sanderson illustrating a number of processes involved with bookbinding, including smoothing, pressing, cutting and paring. The final lecture was given by Crane, who also delivered the President's address. In this instance, and perhaps because Cobden-Sanderson's dramatic skills had been so appreciated the week earlier, the latter worked as Crane's assistant, holding lights and displaying visual articles. Crane made good use of a blackboard and 'turned out some really artistic work as easily and rapidly as a lightening sketcher turns out portraits.'⁸¹ He first drew an oak tree, then 'he drew it again so that its outline exactly fitted into, and decorated, a hard and fast rectangle.' His creative skills were appreciated as much as his role as President of the Society.

In the same way that Morris had used his lecture to convey his thoughts on commercialism, Crane spoke to his captive audience about socialism. Wilde clearly admired the way that Crane presented this, commenting that 'Then came the little bit of Socialism, very sensible and very quietly put.'⁸² Crane stressed the negative impact of industry and factory work, referring again to past times when the work of craftsmen

⁷⁸ Wilde, 'Printing and Printers, Lecture at the Arts and Crafts,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 16 November 1888, 5.

⁷⁹ Peter Stansky, *Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s and the Arts and Crafts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 222-225.

⁸⁰ Shaw, 'Cobden-Sanderson on Bookbinding,' in *Shaw on the London Art Scene*, 251.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁸² Wilde, 'The Close of the Arts and Crafts,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 November 1888, 3.

was properly appreciated. He particularly criticized mass-produced reproduction furniture found in places along Tottenham Court Road, which was almost certainly a reference to Maple & Co rather than Heal's, as the latter regularly exhibited with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. However, Crane concluded by suggesting that there could be a balance between craft work and machine, illustrating that his views were not as firmly fixed on this matter as Morris:

Art depends on Life. We cannot get it from machines. And yet machines are bad only when they are our masters. The printing press is a machine that Art values because it obeys her.⁸³

The lecture series proved so popular that it was repeated for the exhibition the following year although there was a break in 1890 before the lectures resumed for the Fourth Exhibition in 1893. This exhibition coincided with the founding of the *Studio* journal, a publication which was to have a profound effect on promoting British design and craft abroad. It was widely distributed internationally and therefore responsible for exposing and introducing artists to a wide international audience, while the readership kept pace with the latest trends in decorative art. From the start the journal allied itself with craft and design, with the opening article in the first edition titled 'Artist as Craftsman No. 1, Sir Frederic Leighton Bart PRA, As a Modeller in Clay.' As President of the Royal Academy, Leighton was considered the most distinguished contemporary British artist. To publish an interview with him about his craftwork was a brave and radical step.

Fifth Exhibition, 1896

The Fifth Exhibition of 1896 received extensive coverage in the *Studio* with both commentary and illustrations, but this exhibition is also well-documented with photographs taken by Emery Walker, mentioned at the beginning of the Chapter and which provide a valuable trace of the event. Examining the first photograph, taken in

⁸³ Ibid.

the West Room looking towards the east wall, it is possible to identify the objects on display with reference to the catalogue. (Figure 51) Visitors entered the West Room from the door on the left in the image and turned immediately to their left, so that this particular section between the two doors represented the starting point of the exhibition with the first object listed in the catalogue. The display in this section was especially important in setting the tone of the exhibition, providing model examples of a variety of work and encouraging visitors to engage with the exhibition.

Of particular note is the way in which the walls are almost completely covered using exhibits of handmade curtains, tapestries and hand-woven Irish linen. This meant that the red of the walls was entirely concealed. Crane had declared from the outset that red was 'a colour really very rarely suited to set off pictures successfully, cool and neutral tones, or white, being much better.'⁸⁴ By obscuring large portions of the walls in the West Room he succeeded in changing the background colour through alternative means. The way that the walls are tightly packed with objects recalls the Summer Exhibitions at the RA, where paintings hung without spaces between the frames. However, the narrative which emerged at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibition was peculiar to the aims of the Society. Here the wall resembled a patchwork quilt consisting of fabrics and illustrations carefully linked together, with the result that the section metamorphosed into a single work of art representing the many strands of arts and crafts design.

The area visible in Figure 51 comprises numbers 1 to 46 in the catalogue and is displayed in a largely symmetrical fashion. At either end and in the centre of the wall hang important works by Crane, positioned to resemble a triptych with its central panel and two wings. These are cartoons for stained glass windows for the (former) Agapemonite Church of the Ark of the Covenant in Upper Clapton, London. At Catalogue Number 1 is Crane's cartoon for *Death and Disease*, while above a centrally-placed sideboard hang numbers 20 and 21, *The Sun of Righteousness*, and at the far end of this section *Sin and Shame* hangs at number 46. These windows are perceived

⁸⁴ Crane, *Reminiscences*, 322.

as Crane's most important work in stained glass.⁸⁵ (A recent photograph of the cartoons is shown in Figure 52)

The symmetrical design suggests that the Selection Committee were more focussed on the overall aesthetic scheme in this part of the room. However, an analysis of the objects placed between Crane's cartoons indicates that a huge variety of different types of work were shown next to each other, which corroborates the Society's belief that all objects were of equal value. In addition to the linens, tapestries and cartoons, the selection included a mirror, a carved book slide, an oak book cover, a stoneware bowl, the panel for the front of a piano in silver and bronze, a copper pot-pourri jar and a fan panel. The size, shape, material and monetary value of these crafted objects covered a vast range but here they are all presented as the end result of honest labour and skilled design. The display activated the spaces at the New Gallery to enhance the principles of the Society.

A second photograph of the West Room, taken from the south east corner, shows a wide view of the space and includes the harpsichord (mentioned earlier in relation to Kate Faulkner) on a low platform at one end. (Figure 53) The centre section, opposite the wall described above, mirrored the east wall in several ways. The wall hangings and pictures were placed symmetrically, with the overall design scheme apparently taking precedent. A connection between the two walls is clear when examining the Catalogue, as the central work at Number 108 is surrounded by two more of Crane's cartoons for the Church in East Clapton. These represent the *Translation of Enoch* at Number 106 and the *Translation of Elijah* at Number 107. This suggests that the West Room was specifically organised around Crane's noteworthy cartoons, or perhaps around the man himself. In between the cartoons on the west wall, at Number 108, the Committee placed the work of another prominent figure: Burne-Jones. This is a large

⁸⁵ For more information on the windows see Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 4: North* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 485.

needlework panel of *Love*, designed by Burne-Jones and executed and exhibited by Frances Horner.⁸⁶

The number of important works and well-known artists in the West Room may have been the reason behind the evening lecture series moving into this space from the North Room in 1896. It became a performance space in a dual respect, with weekly lectures from the Committee in addition to musical performances on the harpsichord. The harpsichord was designed and constructed by Arnold Dolmetsch (1858-1940) who, until this time, had been a specialist restorer of antique instruments.⁸⁷ According to Edmond Johnson the harpsichord was probably the first instrument of its kind to be built in Britain in nearly a century and represented a turning point in Dolmetsch's career.⁸⁸ He was a skilled craftsman whose dedication to creating beautiful objects using traditional techniques allied him closely with Arts and Crafts ideals. The distinctive decorative work on the body of the instrument was designed and carried out by Helen Coombe (1864-1937) who later married the artist Roger Fry. Coombe also exhibited three other objects at this exhibition, cartoons for stained glass windows at High Cross Church in Ware, all of which were hung in the West Room.

Although the exterior of the harpsichord, which was over eight feet long, was simply lacquered in green, the interior was richly illuminated, leading the *Studio* to praise the work as 'a singularly and beautiful object' with 'refinement of design.'⁸⁹ Coombe filled the surfaces with flowing ribbons, wisteria vines, roaming peacocks and rare flowers, using silver paint to highlight certain features, while on the lid flap she painted an image of the god Pan playing his aulos. (Figure 54) One of the most striking features of the decoration was a 'line of music painted in Renaissance notation along the curve of

⁸⁶ Frances Horner, neé Graham (1854-1940), was a daughter of William Graham, patron to Burne-Jones. Burne-Jones was reputed to be in love with Frances and included her image in many of his works.

⁸⁷ It is now in the Horniman Museum, London. HM no. M72-1983.

⁸⁸ Edmond Johnson, 'Arnold Dolmetsch's "Green Harpsichord" and the Musical Arts and Crafts,' *Keyboard Perspectives* Vol. X (2017): 159.

⁸⁹ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1896 (final article),' *Studio* 9, no. 46 (January 1897): 265

the soundboard.⁹⁰ (Figure 55) It is the descant line of *Withowt Dyscord*, a three-part song attributed to Henry VIII and now preserved in the British Library.⁹¹

The Catalogue to the exhibition included a special note informing visitors that 'from time to time the Harpsichord will be played upon to exhibit its tone. Due notice will be given in the Gallery.'⁹² In addition to these occasional demonstrations, a full-length lecture-recital was held in the Gallery on the evening of October 29, a ticketed event to which visitors had to pay. Those attending had the opportunity to hear Dolmetsch explain the mechanism of the instrument, while also being entertained with musical illustrations. The *Studio* published a lengthy review of the exhibition and singled out the harpsichord for particular praise:

One of the most deservedly popular items in the whole show was the harpsichord, designed by Arnold Dolmetsch, assisted by W. Nearn. At certain times - when its maker or Miss Dolmetsch played some old world sinfonia or suite-it was impossible to get near enough to hear, much less see it. For the dainty music of the plucked string is only remotely allied to the struck tri-chord of its descendant, the modern grand pianoforte.... Of stained green wood, with charming decorations painted by Helen Coombe, it was a singularly beautiful and graceful object. For complete re-infusion of an older spirit into modern work, this delightful instrument is absolutely perfect of its class. Refinement of design is fitly mated with refinement of sound.⁹³

While the West Room held the work of some of the most prominent artists, as well as the specially-featured harpsichord, the larger items of furniture were displayed in the North Room, including a vast lectern for St. Cuthbert's Church, Earls Court. (Figures 56 and 57) This was designed, executed and exhibited by W. Bainbridge Reynolds with a team of assistants and was positioned in the gallery so that visitors were able to walk

⁹⁰ Johnson, 'Green Harpsichord,' 159.

⁹¹ 'A Collection of songs, ballads and instrumental pieces, composed early in the reign of Henry VIII, first half of sixteenth century,' BL Add MS 31, 922, British Library, London.

⁹² *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Catalogue of the Fifth Exhibition* (London: Chiswick Press, 1896), 30.

⁹³ The Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1896 (final article), *Studio* Vol. 9, no. 46 (January 1897): 265.

around the piece and view it from every angle. It was constructed of wrought iron and copper, with a base containing a central shaft to hold a revolving reading desk.⁹⁴ Donald Findlay suggests that the design is ‘a conflation of two facing pages of Pugin’s Designs for Metalwork, one of which shows a lectern and the other designs for candle brackets for walls.’⁹⁵ He continues by explaining that the copper and iron are treated in many different ways—beaten, pierced, repousse, twisted, embossed and incised—which would have been impossible to achieve with wood, thus demonstrating a true understanding of the material. Bainbridge Reynolds exhibited twelve items at the exhibition, although a number of these were large works which were represented with a photograph of the object rather than the object itself, such as a gate from Glamis Castle.

Examining the North Room display from another angle reveals three tapestries by Burne-Jones in view behind the lectern: *Ministering Angels*, *Spring* and *Praising Angels*. (Figure 58) The sign above the central tapestry indicates the exit onto Heddon Street which was used as access for taking large items in and out of the exhibition spaces. The display in the North Room was more complex than that in the West. Although there were attempts at symmetry, particularly in the placement of cabinets and sofas in strategic positions, the large items of differing shape and material could not easily be matched with other objects in the room. The cultural context for which the objects were made was replaced in nearly all cases and was more dramatic in the North Room because of the scale of the exhibits. Domestic items such as beds, together with ecclesiastical objects such as the lectern, were removed from their natural habitat and placed in an exhibition space. As hand-crafted objects, the skill of the designers and makers could be appreciated, but the objects were disconnected from their original context. This aspect of exhibition display was to cause problems when the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society took part in the Turin International Exhibition of 1902.

⁹⁴ Donald Findlay, ‘All Glorious Within,’ accessed 16 June 2023 <https://www.saintcuthbert.org/all-glorious-within>.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Two further photographs depict a special exhibition to commemorate the work and life of the late Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893) in the South Room. (Figures 59 and 60) He had been an early member of the Society and his grandson, Ford Madox Hueffer, penned an essay about his work for Catalogue. While Madox Brown cartoons, drawings and oils hung tightly packed on the walls of the room, a collection of book covers and illuminations were displayed in wooden cases with large glass panes, placed around the edges of the room. Wooden cases were used throughout the exhibition spaces and are dominant in many of the available images, built in a variety of shape and size. The use of the cabinets echoed the presentation of artwork at the South Kensington Museum where smaller items were carefully placed in glass cabinets to be viewed and admired from all angles. (Figure 61) Using the same display tactics at the New Gallery reinforced the aim of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society of raising the status of craftsmen and their work.

The cabinets had a practical purpose in that they protected precious items from dust, greasy hands and possible theft by creating a physical barrier. Additionally, they served to help create a sense of awe, reinforcing the elite nature of selected objects: if behind glass, these artworks clearly required additional protection. The specific placement of cabinets, particularly when combined with the positioning of chairs and sofas, also functioned to create new routes through the gallery spaces. Visitors were drawn away from merely examining the artworks on the walls and instead drawn towards the centre. The photographs provide an invaluable record of the content and display tactics at the exhibition, while also helping to identify the location of some of these objects today.

Turin, 1902

This approach to presenting objects, analysed in relation to the First Exhibition in 1888 and the Fifth Exhibition of 1896, remained in place for the first six exhibitions but was adjusted after the Society's involvement with the *International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art* in Turin in 1902. This was the first international fair of its kind and provided an opportunity for designers and craftworkers to assess advancements made

from countries all around the globe. Sections were divided by country, with each nation's organisers advised to focus on 'the modern dwelling in its decorative elements, the modern room in its decorative ensemble, and the house and street as decorative organisms.'⁹⁶ As a result, the majority of nations created model interiors of domestic settings which were then filled with suitable architectural fittings, furniture and decorative art.

The English section, however, which was organised by Crane, transposed their traditional display methods from the New Gallery exhibitions to fill the spaces at Turin in a similar fashion. This could have been due to a lack of funds and time, although Crane **may** also have deliberately chosen to continue the display methods from the New Gallery, which had been designed to reflect the aims and ideals of the Society. The Turin Fair provided a first experience for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society to present and organise their own display of objects on an international stage, while it also constituted England's national display, despite the fact that the Society received no funding or support from any government institutions in England. Crane referred to this lack of support in his review of the exhibition, commenting that the German section, for example, had received fifty thousand German marks from their government as well as additional monies from a large number of private contributors.⁹⁷ Their extravagant entrance display reflected this financial backing. (Figure 62) All exhibiting nations, except for England and Scotland, were officially represented and fiscally supported by their governments.

The Italian organising committee had approached Crane, as President of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, to create an English display. Without supporting funds, he chose to simply divert his touring retrospective exhibition which had been in Budapest, Austria and Germany, whilst adding additional objects from members of the Society which could be transported to Turin in time. Photographs of the English section,

⁹⁶ Quoted in Morna O'Neill, 'Rhetorics of Display: Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau at the Turin Exhibition of 1902,' *Journal of Design History* Vol. 20, no. 3 (Autumn 2007): 210.

⁹⁷ 'The International Exhibition of Modern Art at Turin. The German Section,' *Studio* Vol. 27, no. 117 (December 1902): 188.

together with reviews of the exhibition, reveal that presentation methods were very similar to that at the New Gallery, where walls were tightly packed with a variety of cartoons and tapestries, and objects were presented within cabinets as important works of art in their own right. (Figures 63 and 64) This display came under heavy criticism from Francis H. Newbery who was responsible for the Scottish rooms at Turin.⁹⁸ He condemned Crane and the English section for creating spaces 'arranged without idea and without scheme, instead of being a selection of art work related by beauty and through utility to its purpose.'⁹⁹ Furthermore, he particularly objected to the way 'carpets are nailed up where tapestries usually find a place,' and asked 'where is the art in all this?'¹⁰⁰

By contrast, countries such as Belgium, Austria and Germany laid out their rooms to reflect domestic interiors or other private spaces so that the objects were interpreted by the viewer as both useful and decorative. (Figures 65, 66, 67 and 68) Newbery viewed this format of display as easier for the visitor to comprehend and, by extension, it meant that they were more likely to buy such objects for their own homes. The Scottish section, too, was organised to mimic a domestic setting. The pride of their rooms was the Rose Boudoir, which was created jointly by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald in half of one of the three rooms allocated. (Figure 69) Mackintosh painted the walls and ceilings of all three rooms in white and further subdivided the spaces with white-painted wood panels. As will be discussed, the use of white as a backdrop for arts and crafts objects was adopted by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society at their first exhibition at the New Gallery after Turin.

Despite the criticism from Newbery, the English section received particular honours from the jury panel with excerpts from various speeches reprinted in the Foreword to the *Catalogue of the Seventh Exhibition of 1903* at the New Gallery. The Swedish representative on the jury had paid 'special homage to the art of England' in his speech

⁹⁸ F.H. Newbery (1855-1946) was Director of the Glasgow School of Art 1885-1917.

⁹⁹ F.H. Newbery, 'The International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art at Turin. The English Section,' *Studio* Vol. 26, no. 114 (September, 1902): 251.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 252.

explaining the origins of the Arts and Crafts movement.¹⁰¹ He pointed to three particular English artists as the inspiration behind the resurgence in the highest standards of decorative art: William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones and Walter Crane.

Seventh Exhibition, 1903

The Society absorbed both the accolades and criticism from Turin which resulted in a substantial reorganisation of the North Room for the Society's Seventh Exhibition in 1903. The room was divided into fourteen recesses, or cubicles, each one organised by an individual, a company or a society. Crane drew attention to the reconfiguration in the Foreword of the catalogue by explaining that 'a definite attempt has been made to give unity and relation in certain combined groups, each distinct and from a different designer, by the subdivision of the gallery into recesses.'¹⁰² This was a dramatic departure from the Society's previous exhibitions where the Selection Committee had asserted total control over presentation and display rather than allowing exhibitors to 'present what they have to show in their own manner.'¹⁰³

The use of recesses caused a measure of disagreement within the Selection Committee, some of whom were concerned with the lack of overall control in arrangement and presentation. Consequently, W.A.S Benson, George Jack and Halsey Ricardo formed a further sub-committee for the North Room alone in order to oversee the final plan. Responses to the rearrangement were mixed: the *British Architect* was largely complimentary, suggesting that the recesses acted as an aide to 'more fully realise the full value of each artist's work.'¹⁰⁴ The *Studio*, too, supported the new arrangement, interpreting it as evidence of the Society's 'guild spirit' which promoted individual artistry yet also encouraged artists to collaborate by choice if they wished to.¹⁰⁵ Some recesses were unanimously considered a resounding success, such as

¹⁰¹ *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: Catalogue of the Seventh Exhibition* (London: Chiswick Press, 1903), 12-13.

¹⁰² *Catalogue of Seventh Exhibition*, 14.

¹⁰³ Lewis F. Day, 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,' *Art Journal* no.3 (March 1903) 88.

¹⁰⁴ 'Arts and Crafts,' *British Architect*, 30 January 1903, 73.

¹⁰⁵ 'The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery: Second notice,' *Studio* Vol. 28, no. 120 (March 1903): 117-126.

Recess One which was arranged by Crane. Containing twenty-three items, these ranged from a settee designed by Crane and made by Edward Miles, to a Brussels carpet, also designed by Crane and executed by Templeton Limited. There were, in addition, a number of objects designed by colleagues including a panel of tiles painted in coloured glazes which was exhibited by Pilkington's Tile company and designed by Lewis F. Day.

The only surviving photograph from the exhibition depicts Recess Five which was organised by George Walton (1867-1933) and displayed fifteen named items, some of which were groups of objects. (Figure 70) The *Studio* highlighted the 'Brussels' sideboard, a 'beautiful dresser in dark, unpolished walnut' designed by Walton and executed by J.S. Henry and Company. Other pieces in the recess included the Eros mosaic which hung above the dresser, two 'Lovat' chairs and an extensive display of Walton's new glassware. By 1903 his work was selling well both at home and abroad. He had received a commission from Carl Bembé in 1902, for example, to decorate rooms at his home in Mainz and this led to further commissions on the continent.¹⁰⁶

Glassware, however, was a new departure, and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibition provided Walton with the opportunity to publicly display his latest designs. His selection demonstrated a 'strong attraction to Venetian glass,' examples of which he probably saw at the British Museum and the South Kensington Museum.¹⁰⁷

The strongest criticism for the new mode of display was reserved for the 'rather bare look to certain of the recesses,' which, it was suggested in the *Art Journal*, were assembled in haste, a reflection of a rather late decision to divide the room into cubicles. Recess Six, for example, exhibited by Sydney H. Barnsley, contained only ten single items: a sideboard, writing desk, frame and box, a chest of drawers, a cabinet, plaster frieze, bedspread, panel and plaque. Unfortunately, there is no image to clarify the visual presentation of the recess but a mere ten objects were clearly not enough to make an impact. Ultimately, the recesses cannot have been considered a success as the installation was repeated neither at the exhibition at the Grafton Gallery in 1906 nor at the final exhibition at the New Gallery in 1910.

¹⁰⁶ Karen Moon, *George Walton, Designer and Architect* (Oxford: White Cockade publishing, 1993), 130.

¹⁰⁷ Moon, *George Walton*, 131.

The Exhibition of 1903 is notable for one other critical change to display modes, doubtless again a result of the Society's involvement at Turin. The walls of the West Room (which were still covered in the original red at this point) were re-covered with white canvas, a move that looked ahead to the 'white cube' design of galleries during the twentieth century. As remarked upon earlier, Crane had always held that white was the best colour to act as a backdrop to Arts and Crafts objects. In the *Catalogue to the Seventh Exhibition*, he explained that the neutral colour formed 'an agreeable background for the very various exhibits which the Society has to display, coloured or black-and-white designs, or needlework, all telling to better advantage on the white ground.'¹⁰⁸ This new colour scheme was only adopted for the West Room, perhaps because of the expense involved in covering this space alone. The following year, when the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers began exhibiting at the New Gallery, they also insisted on a white covering to the walls, reflecting the changing tastes in staging an art show. These changes position the New Gallery firmly at the front of new approaches to display and presentation which continued throughout the twentieth century.

The twenty-two years of collaboration between the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and the New Gallery provided a consistent opportunity for decorative artists to have their work exposed to the public both at home and abroad. Through the exhibitions and its linked publications, public and critics were able to assess the ongoing progress and development of decorative arts, while students could learn from ideal models, thus promoting the educational drive of the Society. In 1916 the Society achieved one particular goal, that of holding an exhibition at the Royal Academy. At this point Henry Wilson (1864-1934) held the role of President of the Society while Sir Edward Poynter (1836-1919) was President of the RA. The timing of the exhibition, mid-way through the first World War, meant that it was largely forgotten in the years afterwards. However, in 1993 Peter Rose re-evaluated the exhibition through a close assessment of images and press reviews, and concluded that visitor numbers were extremely high

¹⁰⁸ *Catalogue of the Seventh Exhibition*, 15.

and public interest piqued by the display.¹⁰⁹ The *Studio* devoted a number of articles to the show and declared that ‘the Society was rewarded by what has probably been a record attendance of visitors curious to see Mr. Wilson’s interesting scheme of reconstruction and decoration and the thousand and one objects of art and industry displayed on all sides of the galleries.’¹¹⁰

Today scholars are able to assess the historical and artistic significance of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society within the wider art world. Morna O’Neil argues that ‘by 1900 the Arts and Crafts movement had become an official national style,’ referring in particular to their involvement at the Turin exhibition.¹¹¹ The website of today’s Society, renamed the Society of Designer Craftsmen in 1960, claims that the movement was ‘one of the most influential, profound and far reaching design movements of modern times.’¹¹² It enabled the creation of a number of new professional networks and of a new vocabulary attached to the movement, while also encouraging a way of using exhibition spaces to display a wide variety of art forms. In 1888, what appeared to be a highly risky venture, in fact proved to be the beginning of a movement that was to continue well beyond what might have been imagined. The backing of Comyns Carr and Hallé provided additional support and influence. Writing his Memoirs in 1909, Hallé commented that he was ‘glad to think that the New Gallery was the first home of these workers in what used to be called the minor arts.’¹¹³

The chapter has also questioned whether the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society would have succeeded without the New Gallery’s expansive exhibition spaces, crafted interiors, ideal location on Regent Street and committed Directors. The mood to change the status of craftworkers was prevalent in Britain in 1888 but organisations

¹⁰⁹ Peter Rose, “‘It must be done now’: The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Burlington House, 1916,” *Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 – the present* No. 17 (1993): 3-12.

¹¹⁰ William Whitley, ‘Arts and crafts at the Royal Academy, [2],’ *Studio* Vol. 69, no. 285 (December 1916): 120.

¹¹¹ Morna O’Neill, ‘A Political Theory of Decoration, 1901-1910,’ in *The Edwardian Sense: Art, Design, and Performance in Britain, 1901-1910*, edited by Morna O’Neill and Michael Hatt (New Haven: Yale University Press and London: The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2010), 289.

¹¹² Society of Designer Craftsmen, ‘Our History,’ accessed 11 July 2023, <https://societyofdesignercraftsmen.org.uk/our-history>.

¹¹³ C.E. Hallé, *Notes from a Painter’s Life* (London: J. Murray, 1909), 230.

such as the Art Workers Guild, while hugely significant to the formation of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, failed to establish regular high-status exhibitions. The timing of the New Gallery's opening coincided exactly with the moment that Crane and his colleagues were ready to launch a new society and promote an 'exhibition with a purpose.'¹¹⁴

There is no doubt that the success of the Society owes a huge debt to the New Gallery, a debt which has not previously been either explored or acknowledged. The gallery also benefitted from its association with the Society as the spaces became connected to new thinking about different types of art which, in turn, promoted the New Gallery as an attractive option for other alternative, marginalised art forms. This reputation was furthered in 1897 when George Eastman and George Davison from the Eastman Kodak Company selected the New Gallery as the venue for a unique exhibition of thousands of photographs taken with Kodak cameras, the result of an international competition. The next chapter investigates this one-off exhibition where, once again, the gallery spaces were transformed to create a new narrative.

¹¹⁴ 'The New Gallery,' *The Times*, 29 September 1888, 6.

Chapter 3: Eastman Kodak Exhibition at the New Gallery,

27 October – 16 November 1897

The most radical remodelling of the New Gallery interiors took place in the autumn of 1897 when the Eastman Kodak Company hired the venue for the largest exhibition of photographs that had ever been assembled in London. The exhibition, part of an extensive advertising and marketing campaign for the Kodak brand, formed the culmination of a worldwide amateur photographic competition that attracted over 25,000 entries, all of which were taken using a Kodak camera. It was lauded in the photographic press as ‘the biggest and best thing ever done in this country in the way of photographic competitions.’¹

For the New Gallery the exhibition formed a critical layer of the metaphorical palimpsest, confirming the venue as a space which encouraged alternative and avant-garde art forms. Building on the reputation established through twenty-seven previous exhibitions, including five organised by the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, the gallery extended their sphere of activity to embrace technological advances, while also increasing cosmopolitan participation, largely fuelled by Kodak being an American company. Not only was this the sole time in the gallery’s history that an exhibition was the product of a commercial company, but it was also unprecedented for a commercial organisation to hire an art gallery to display and promote its products. Furthermore, it was the New Gallery’s first exhibition of photographs and the success of the show undoubtedly encouraged the Royal Photographic Society to select the premises for their annual exhibitions from 1900 to 1909, having used a variety of venues up until that point.² The spaces at 121 Regent Street were revealed, once again, to have that unique distinction of being strikingly versatile and adaptable, thus extremely suitable for a wide variety of art forms.

¹ *Amateur Photographer*, 5 November 1897. The Kodak Historical Archive at the British Library holds thirty-two complimentary reviews of the exhibition, including those from the *Telegraph*, *Illustrated London News*, *British Journal of Photography*, *Cycling* and *Westminster Gazette*.

² The Photographic Society of London (founded 1853) obtained Royal status in 1894. The society exhibited at the Society of British Artists in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, as well as the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours at 5A Pall Mall East before relocating to the New Gallery.

The Eastman Kodak exhibition drew together a number of individuals, groups and concepts, many of which have previously been the subject of individual scholarship but, until now, have not been brought together within a specific context. An analysis of the exhibition provides the opportunity to re-evaluate a number of matters involved in a fresh light. Of particular interest are the three major players: George Eastman (1854-1932) founder of the Eastman Kodak company, George Davison (1845-1930), organiser of the exhibition, Managing Director of the Eastman Photographic Materials Company, London, a leading impressionist photographer and founder of the Linked Ring Brotherhood, and George Walton (1867-1933), the Scottish designer who carried out the dramatic remodelling of the interior spaces.³ Additional groups associated with the show include the aforementioned Linked Ring Brotherhood, as well as the Glasgow School of Art and the Royal family, while debates arising from the exhibition include discourse surrounding photography as an art form, the role of women photographers and the use of a West End art gallery as a vehicle for advertising a commercial product.

This chapter critically analyses the way the spaces at 121 Regent Street were remodelled for the exhibition and the fresh meaning given to the spaces as a result. A range of documents remain from the exhibition which provide the opportunity to reconstruct the event and investigate the wider cultural and social experiences of those taking part and those attending. These documents include a twenty-five page catalogue, a booklet entitled *Outline of Arrangements*, a selection of press reviews and Kodak advertisements, letters from Eastman to his mother, two Souvenir books and five installation photographs from the exhibition.⁴ Together this evidence works as 'a mode of memory, of recollection' and provides verification about how the physical transformation of the spaces addressed the questions of the role of the Kodak

³ The company was founded in 1881 as the Eastman Dry Plate Company and renamed the Eastman Kodak Company in 1892. The Eastman Photographic Materials Company was established in London in 1889 to manufacture and sell Kodak products outside North America. The Linked Ring Brotherhood was a secession group which broke away from the Photographic Society in 1892 to establish their own annual Salons, first at the Dudley Gallery and later at the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours, before disbanding in 1909.

⁴ Eastman wrote to his mother daily. The letters have now been digitised and are held with the George Eastman Papers at the River Campus Libraries, Rochester, <https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/864>. The catalogue and *Outline of Arrangements* are also available on this site.

snapshot within the wider field of photography, as well as the place of photography within the art world as a whole.⁵

George Eastman: The Man Behind the Camera

Eastman revolutionised photography for the masses when he invented a hand-held camera which required no special training to operate. The Number One Kodak, introduced in 1888, was a simple box camera weighing under two pounds which arrived loaded with a roll of film that could make one hundred circular images. When the roll was finished, the entire machine was sent back to the company headquarters in Rochester, New York, where the roll was processed for the customer. Eastman, who understood the merit of advertising from the outset, launched a campaign to highlight the simplicity of the camera, coining the slogan 'You press the button, we do the rest.' (Figure 71) The origin of the word *Kodak* has been the subject of much speculation. Eastman's most recent biographer, Elizabeth Brayer, writes that Eastman particularly liked the letter *K* as it was the first letter of his mother's maiden name (Kilbourn) and that he invented a word that both began and ended with this letter.⁶ Perhaps more revealingly, on registering the brand in England, Eastman was obliged to explain the derivation of the name to the British Patent Office. He summed this up in three points: the word was short, it could not be mispronounced, and it did not resemble 'anything in the art and [could not] be associated with anything in the art except Kodak.'⁷ Kodak, therefore, was unique.

Brayer also asserts that, although Eastman was an intensely private man who was reticent about his personal life, 'he aggressively sought publicity for his products.'⁸ As a keen amateur photographer, he designed the Kodak as a response to the shortcomings

⁵ Michael Shanks, *Archaeology*, accessed 17 September 2022, <https://mshanks.com/archaeology/>. The term 'snapshot' was coined in 1860 by Sir John Herschel (1792-1871) who argued that the aim and quick snap of the camera shutter was analogous to the aim and snap of a gun trigger in hunting. It was not until the arrival of Eastman's Kodak camera nearly thirty years later that the snapshot became a reality.

⁶ Elizabeth Brayer, *George Eastman: A Biography* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 63.

⁷ Carl W. Ackerman, *George Eastman: Founder of Kodak and the Photography Business* (Washington D.C.: Beard Books, 2000), 76.

⁸ Brayer, *George Eastman*, ix.

of cameras on the market at that time. After buying a camera for an intended holiday, Eastman realized the inadequacy of the equipment in terms of bulk and weight, in addition to the issues of considerable expense and time required to develop photographs. These insights into the relative strengths and weaknesses of design and operation helped to drive forward the early advertising campaigns which focussed on ease of use and convenience of shape and size. Until 1892, Eastman assumed sole responsibility for the company's creative marketing and advertising, employing the agencies Frank Seaman and J. Walter Thompson as media buyers. However, with the growth of the Kodak empire, and in recognition of the critical role of marketing, Eastman hired Lewis Burnell Jones from 1892 to drive the brand forward.

The Route through the Spaces

The London exhibition of 1897 formed a significant extension of the Kodak global marketing campaign and the choice of venue, a successful West End art gallery, can be interpreted as a part of this plan. Eastman already knew this part of London well and he recognised the commercial advantages of holding an exhibition in an established, thriving retail area of the capital, as well as one where there was a growing interest in photography by both professionals and amateurs. We learn, from his letters to his mother, that the particular choice of venue for the exhibition was of great importance. It was essential that it be in the appropriate location and also to be the correct size, layout and style. At the New Gallery, all these considerations were met and it is clear that the splendour of the interior was a particular attraction to Eastman.⁹ Whether he planned to choose such a singular venue, or whether it was pure chance, it marked the exhibition as different from the start.

The exhibition was designed to promote Kodak as *the* camera for all photographers, from keen amateurs to distinguished experts, members of leading clubs and societies, professionals and celebrities. Eastman gave full credit for the exhibition to George Davison, who was 'working like a slave and will deserve all the credit for organising the

⁹ Eastman, letter to his mother, 27 October 1897.

affair.’¹⁰ The exhibition was carefully structured to include work from all the groups mentioned above. Commencing in the Central Hall, visitors were introduced to the latest range of Kodak cameras, while also encouraged to appraise the Balcony above which held photographic enlargements depicting ‘the extent and importance’ of the Kodak works at Rochester, New York.¹¹ From the Hall, the visitor traversed into the North Room which held thousands of competition entries, demonstrating the achievements of men, women, young and old, from around the globe. The route continued into the West Room which was set up as the invitation room. It was here that viewers could admire the accomplishments of well-known, distinguished photographers, as well as a group of thirty-one images taken by female members of the Royal family. The final room, the South, was reserved for technical exhibits.

The exhibition route was carefully crafted to show the wide range of results achievable with a Kodak, particularly to reinforce the concept that it was possible to take truly artistic photographs with the one-click camera. The route was presented as a structured, cumulative journey comparable to a performance presenting a particular narrative which, in turn, resonated with a number of Kodak advertisements published in the press throughout the 1880s and 1890s. One way of analysing the exhibition and exploring the debates that arose from it is to interpret the three main gallery spaces in relation to three distinct types of advertisement from this period. The first type, and relating to the display in the Central Hall, simply presented a drawing of a Kodak with the brand name and a short slogan. A second category of advertisements presented Kodak as a lifestyle choice and these can be linked to the exhibition in the North Room. The third type of marketing was twofold: selected advertisements portrayed inspirational or famous people using a Kodak for their adventures, while Eastman also encouraged well-known photographers or public figures to be seen using Kodaks (supplied by him) in a way that in the twenty-first century is called celebrity branding, or celebrity endorsement. This type of advertising can be connected to the Invitation Room in the West Room.

¹⁰ Eastman, letter to his mother, 22 October 1897.

¹¹ *Catalogue: Eastman Photographic Exhibition*, New Gallery, 1897, 4.

The Central Hall as a Market

A photograph of the remodelled Central Hall provides rich evidence of Kodak's display methods and the way the physical alterations to the space were created to engage the visitor, while also providing an insight into the social and cultural experiences of retail in the later nineteenth century. (Figure 39) Immediately on entering the Hall the visitor encountered three long tables set in a U-shape. The tables consisted of hard upper surfaces with a fabric of soft, ruffled pleats to cover the legs, creating an elegant finish. The longest table stood directly opposite the entrance and publicised three models of camera: the Pocket Kodak, the Cartridge Kodak and the new Folding Pocket, which was of particular interest and heralded by the press as 'a marvel of ingenuity,' being 'so small, so light, so cheap.'¹² Behind the table, a display board was carefully positioned with *Kodak* inscribed in large bold letters to reinforce the brand name, while photographs covered the board to illustrate what could be achieved with each of the three cameras. Three vast palms added height and a touch of exoticism to the display, with the central fountain crammed full of lush planting. The overall effect seems to have been to bring the outdoors inside, a concept which was reinforced with the light streaming into the Hall from the skylights on the Balcony above. As will be discussed in due course, Kodak advertising was predominantly set outdoors and promoted an active lifestyle.

The display in the Hall represented the beginning of the visitor's journey and can be linked to the simplest form of Kodak advertisement as seen in Figure 71. An example from the *Illustrated London News* depicts another characteristic version of this type of advertisement and includes a hand-drawn illustration with the brand name and slogan. (Figure 72) In addition, there were regular smaller announcements in selected papers, such as one in the *Graphic* (Figure 73), as well as specific notices to encourage visitors to the exhibition. (Figure 74) Furthermore, during the exhibition, an electric Kodak sign radiated from a corner of Trafalgar Square, one of the earliest examples of electric

¹² 'Kodak Exhibition,' *Star*, 30 October 1897; 'Eastman Kodak Exhibition,' *Penny Illustrated*, 30 October 1897, 275.

advertising boards in London.¹³ Eastman showed himself yet again to be pioneering in the field of advertising. Both the Trafalgar Square sign and the press advertising reinforced the brand name, the simplicity of design and ease of operation, resonating with the presentation of Kodak wares in the Central Hall.

It is plausible that many of the visitors to the exhibition were entering the New Gallery for the first time and might have been apprehensive about venturing through its doors on Regent Street. Examining the photograph of the Central Hall more closely, there are elements that are reminiscent of a shop interior, probably a destination more frequented by some of the public. The creation of a familiar setting might have been a deliberate move to make people feel more comfortable on entering the Gallery. Indeed, unlike a conventional art exhibition, Eastman Kodak arranged for ‘attendants in charge of the apparatus in the hall [to] give every information, and explain the construction and use of these appliances,’ reinforcing the impression of a shop.¹⁴ Although cameras were not on sale in the New Gallery, attendants were able direct visitors to the wholesale and retail outlet at 115 to 117 Oxford Street, whilst also explaining that a new shop would be opening shortly in Regent Street.

The premises at 115 to 117 Oxford Street had been operational since 1888, at first as an office before expanding into sales. More relevant to the exhibition, however, was Eastman’s acquisition of a new retail shop in close proximity, at 171 to 173 Regent Street, which he felt confident would ‘be the finest shop in the street.’¹⁵ We can gain some understanding of the nineteenth-century shopper’s expectations through a close examination of the interior of the Regent Street shop, which had a number of similarities with the remodelled Central Hall for the Kodak exhibition. (Figure 75) The photograph shows a large, light, elegant interior with four majestic columns creating an entrance well in the centre. On view are shop front counters, plenty of individual seats for consumers and shelves packed with Kodak apparatus and accessories. The shop

¹³ ‘George Eastman,’ *Kodak*, accessed 12 November 2021, <https://www.kodak.com/en/company/page/george-eastman-history>.

¹⁴ *Outline of Arrangements*, Eastman Photographic Exhibition, 1897, 5.

¹⁵ Eastman, letter to his mother, 13 October 1897.

interior was designed to provide a comfortable, reassuring environment in which to peruse and select items presented by knowledgeable, trained sales personnel. Although sales were not directly carried out at the Eastman Kodak exhibition, by setting up the Central Hall in the form of a shop and using trained assistants to present the cameras and deal with any queries, the exhibition resembled a retail outlet.

The layout and use of the Central Hall as a type of shop or market place referred directly, albeit unintentionally, to the provisions market on the site from 1879 to 1880.¹⁶ Machado argues that ‘the past provides the already written’ and there is a sense that this particular earlier function of the space projected forward, so that the Kodak market was related to the former articulation of the space.¹⁷ The juxtaposition between the two remodellings reinforces both Machado’s argument that layers of history within a building continue to permeate as each change is made, and also Pearson’s assertion that the ‘host’ is not only the original site but also traces left by all previous incarnations.¹⁸ In the earlier market the goods consisted of essential provisions, meat and produce. During the Kodak exhibition the concept of what was essential was reframed: the camera was promoted as an indispensable item for everyday life. The Central Hall was repeatedly refunctioned and remodelled as a market place during the annual exhibitions of the Royal Photographic Society from 1900 to 1909, when up to ten stallholders, including Kodak, took stands to advertise photographic equipment and supplies. Referencing the metaphor of the palimpsest again, it could be argued that this particular past use at the site pervaded the building in dominant way and, as a result, the multi-layered space formed a conversation between repeated manifestations which originated in 1879 and continued for thirty years.¹⁹

¹⁶ See Chapter One.

¹⁷ Rodolfo Machado, ‘Old Buildings as Palimpsest,’ *Progressive Architecture* Vol. 11 (1976): 49.

¹⁸ Machado, ‘Old Buildings,’ 49; Mike Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 35-36.

¹⁹ Machado, ‘Old Buildings,’ 49.

George Walton: The North Room

The grandeur of the Central Hall, with its marble columns and floor, provided a stylish setting for the display of Kodak cameras at the exhibition. In the North Gallery, however, Davison commissioned George Walton to transform the interiors.²⁰ This was the only example of a professional designer being engaged to convert the spaces for an exhibition at the New Gallery. Walton was familiar with the Gallery through his membership of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and had taken part at three of their exhibitions by the time of his commission for Kodak.²¹ He had also very recently completed the decoration for the Linked Ring photographic exhibition at the Dudley Gallery, Piccadilly, the details of which will be discussed at a later point in the chapter. Walton's links with Kodak began in 1897 and by 1899 he was producing several designs annually for their showrooms around Britain and Europe, including the branches in Brussels and Moscow, resulting in a new word appearing in interior design vocabulary: 'Kodakoration, the decorative work of George Walton.'²²

It was almost certainly through the Scottish photographer James Craig Annan (1864-1946), a mutual friend of both Davison and Walton, that Walton received the commission from Davison. Annan and Walton met around 1890 as part of the wider group known as the Glasgow Boys, which also included Walton's brother, Edward, John Guthrie and John Lavery. Nikolaus Pevsner describes the Glasgow art scene of the 1890s as characterised by 'lightness – of touch and colour – [that] distinguished the new Glasgow pictures from the work of the Victorian artists.'²³ These artists particularly admired the work of James McNeill Whistler (1835-1903) and successfully petitioned for the purchase of Whistler's *Thomas Carlyle* in 1891 for the Municipal Collection in Glasgow. Whistler's influence can be seen in certain aspects of the work of this younger group of artists including the use of colour, stencil and patterning. His

²⁰ For a detailed analysis of Walton's life and work, see Karen Moon, *George Walton: Designer and Architect* (Oxford: White Cockade, 1993).

²¹ In 1889 on a collaborative piece; 1890 as G Walton & Co; 1893 one exhibit.

²² Moon, *George Walton*, 76.

²³ Nikolaus Pevsner, 'George Walton, his Life and Work,' *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* Vol. 46 (3 April 1939): 538.

exhibition practice included the use of a velarium to moderate light and the creation of individually designed frames, features incorporated by Walton at the New Gallery.²⁴

The challenge for Walton in the North Room was to create a cohesive exhibition from the thousands of competition entries to the amateur photography competition. The competition illustrated that anyone and everyone could operate a Kodak to record memories and events within their lives, whether snapshots of friends and family, or pictures of places. The popularity of the competition exceeded all expectation, with over 25,000 entries in six classes, judged by a panel of three: Henry Peach Robinson, Andrew Pringle and George Adolphus Storey, A.R.A.²⁵ On hearing how many entries had been submitted, Robinson 'wondered why [he] had been such an idiot as to promise to be one of the jury, for here appeared to be work for the rest of the natural lives of all available judges.'²⁶ The response to the competition highlighted the public's engagement with photography as well as the desire to have their skills recognised, although the monetary rewards, amounting to six hundred pounds, might have also contributed.

These exhibits illustrated the results of a Kodak in the hands of the ordinary person. Where the displays in the Central Hall correlated to advertisements which highlighted the product and its name, those in the North Room resonated with the concept of lifestyle branding and can be linked to a series of advertisements which encouraged the Kodak owner to record memorable, happy occasions with friends and family. The advertisements promoted a way of life, not just a camera. For most families, hiring a professional photographer was not financially feasible, but with the arrival of Kodak, anyone could record special events and journeys to foreign places, or could simply capture likenesses of family and friends. The photographs in the North Room captured such moments.

²⁴ Moon, *George Walton*, 18.

²⁵ At an earlier stage, Maurice Bucquet, President of the Photographic Club of Paris, was listed as a judge rather than Storey.

²⁶ H.P. Robinson, 'Digressions,' *British Journal of Photography* Vol. 44 (December 1897): 772.

Through a carefully staged campaign the public connected the possession of a Kodak with a range of outdoor pursuits so that the camera evolved as 'a necessary accessory to outdoor leisure activities.'²⁷ It suited Kodak to promote the outdoors because an amateur snaphooter was unlikely to have a studio in which to take interior photographs. An early advertisement, dating to 1890, suggests that the ownership of a Kodak would not only enable the consumer to venture on an exciting holiday abroad, but that the camera was also an indispensable item to take with them. (Figure 76) The illustration depicts a selection of physical activities which could be recorded with the click of a camera: cycling, swimming and fishing. There is the additional suggestion that the camera would make a perfect gift, with a comment from Prince Henri of Orleans to endorse this, revealing Eastman's insight into the effectiveness of a famous name to sell a product.²⁸ The advertisement succeeds in appealing on an emotional level with the potential consumer: buy this and you, too, can lead an active, exciting life.

A large part of Eastman's entrepreneurialism was to recognise the market potential in women customers from his earliest days of advertising and this extended to identify children as a target market in the early twentieth century with the arrival of the Brownie camera. A photograph of 1890 depicts Kitty Kramer, a secretary employed by Kodak, holding the Number Two box camera.²⁹ (Figure 77) She is revealed as stylish, confident and alone in an outdoor setting. She holds the camera with ease and has the box slung casually over her shoulder, presenting the image of an independent, active woman who is fully in control of the camera in her hands. Three years later Eastman took a stand at the Chicago World Fair of 1893 and ran a series of advertisements in conjunction with the event, many of which depicted women actively using Kodaks. In one example, two young women, apparently without male escorts, are some distance from the fairground itself. (Figure 78) They are active and curious, studying a potential subject for a photograph and appear to be readying their camera for taking the shot.

²⁷Lynne Warren, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Twentieth-Century Photography* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1613.

²⁸ Henri of Orleans (1867-1901) was an extensive traveller, touring, amongst other places, Tibet, Madagascar and what is now Vietnam.

²⁹ I have not been able to establish whether this was her real name. It seems rather a coincidence that both her first and second name begin with the letter *k*.

These early portrayals of women holding and operating cameras developed into the iconic figure of the Kodak Girl, a pretty young woman wearing, from 1910, an instantly recognisable fresh striped dress. (Figure 79) The Kodak Girl was conceived at a time when the *New Woman* was a developing type and the adventurous, independent nature of the Kodak Girl had much in common with characteristics of the New Woman. There are a number of similarities, additionally, between the Kodak Girl and Charles Dana Gibson's Gibson Girl, who appeared in the press from the 1890s. (Figure 80) John P. Jacob, in *The Kodak Girl*, argues that Eastman simply took Gibson's 'fashionable figure a step further [and] placed a camera in her hands.'³⁰ Certainly, they are both depicted as independent, animated young women, with some of the images of them being remarkably similar. The Gibson Girl, for example, was often seen on a bicycle while bicycles figured in select Kodak advertisements, although the Kodak girl wasn't seated on one until the 1900s. These parallels demonstrate that Eastman was aware of contemporary trends and that his advertising was current and fashionable.

Viewed through twenty-first century eyes the Kodak girl can also be interpreted as rather limited. Nancy Martha West argues that by associating her with the easy-to-operate camera, she is deemed as technologically incompetent, unable to handle developing film and darkrooms.³¹ She represents the amateur snapshotter rather than the professional photographer. However, when Kodak opened their Harrow factory in 1891, it was largely women who were employed to develop and process the film, working in laboratories and dealing with chemicals. (Figure 81) It could also be argued, therefore, that Kodak fully appreciated that men and women were equally capable of handling this process, but that Eastman understood the advantage of aiming his advertising at women - the traditional homemakers in the Victorian era – who would encourage the taking of snapshots to capture significant family occasions.

³⁰ John P. Jacob, *The Kodak Girl: From the Martha Cooper Collection* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2011), 10.

³¹ Nancy Martha West, *Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 53-65.

Two photographs of the North Room, together with written information in the catalogue, provide detailed information about how the space was transformed through Walton's layer of remodelling. (Figures 82 and 83) The result was to create a particular experience for visitors, to engage with them emotionally through the presentation - which had both familiar and unfamiliar elements to it - and to market the potential of the Kodak to the entire audience. Walton's first step, a radical move given that there appear to be no precedents, was to cover the existing red walls with white linen, pulled flat, which created a neutral background for the photographs. This was the first time that the original fabric of the walls had been masked, although it was a step taken by both the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1903 and the International Society when exhibiting at the New Gallery in the first years of the twentieth century.³² Although the concept of the *white cube* was still some way off, the use of white can be linked to a general move towards a white aesthetic seen, for example, in the interiors of Edward William Godwin (1883 – 1886) and the paintings of Whistler.³³ Godwin decorated the interior of Whistler's White House in Tite Street, Chelsea, in the mid-1880s, with varied tones of white covering the walls of the majority of the rooms. At Oscar Wilde's house, also in Tite Street, Godwin utilised a high-gloss white paint and even designed a suite of white furniture for the dining room.³⁴

There appears to be no evidence of other exhibition venues using white or neutral colours as a backdrop in 1897. As Charlotte Klonk outlines in *Spaces of Experience*, green was initially used as a wall covering in picture galleries but this was replaced by red by the early nineteenth century, which then remained the predominant colour in art galleries in Britain and Europe until the arrival of the white cube concept in the early twentieth century.³⁵ The Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Grafton, for example, which opened in 1817 and 1893 respectively, had similar red walls to the New and National Galleries. On the Continent, both the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and the Alte

³² See Chapters Two and Five.

³³ See Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of Gallery Space* (California: University of California Press, 1999).

³⁴ Susan Weber, *E.W. Godwin, Aesthetic Movement Architect and Designer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 217.

³⁵ Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800-2000* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

Pinakothek in Munich also adopted a rich red as a backdrop to paintings. Much of the thinking behind colour choices derived from Goethe's theories: he believed that colours resulted from the interaction of dark and light, with yellow closest to light and blue closest to dark, with red lying between the two and better positioned to add harmony to the wide variety of colour on artists' canvasses.

At the New Gallery, Walton used white as a backdrop to neutralize the existing décor. In order to deal with the multitude of tiny images, he mounted between sixty and seventy together on expansive framed boards carved from dark wood bearing the word *Kodak* in the centre of the upper frame, relieved with painted designs in the corners and the lower strut. The boards were covered with Dutch blue fabric which provided a dark background to the small prints and contrasted with the white walls, presenting a blue and white theme which echoed the revival of interest in blue and white porcelain from both China and Holland. The written and visual evidence of the display in the North Room, as seen through the framework of Pearson and Shanks's arguments, encourages an investigation into how visitors might have responded to the physical manifestation of the room in terms of their own engagement with blue and white. This particular colour scheme suggests a further homage to Whistler, whose interest in and collection of blue and white porcelain was labelled 'Chinamania' in George du Maurier's satirical cartoons for *Punch*. (Figure 84) Whistler painted a series of pictures in which he included images of Chinese porcelain and by the 1880s it became a commodity highly sought after in the Victorian middle-class home.³⁶ Walton might have been deliberately exploring Whistler's fascination, although it is perfectly possible that this scheme was incorporated to appeal to the middle-class visitors who could have viewed the blue and white and associated it with the décor of their own homes.

A very limited number of photographs were individually framed – possibly the winners of each class – while the majority were placed within four additional free-standing portfolios which stood within the Room's central space amongst the usual leather sofas

³⁶ A small exhibition at the Freer Gallery in 2011, *Chinamania: Whistler and the Victorian Craze for Blue and White*, explored Whistler's fascination with the aesthetic through a display of paintings, etchings and pastels, accessed 12 July 2023, <https://asia.si.edu/eshibition/chinamania>.

and a borne settee.³⁷ Above the wall-mounted photographs a stencil design was repeated with strict regularity. The design was botanical, with palm-like fronds which echoed the triplet of giant palms in the Central Hall and one vast palm in the North Room. Walton had incorporated stencils in his interiors from the earliest days of his design work. In William Rowntree's tearooms in Glasgow, for example, he applied a simple stencilled pattern of grass tufts to a large expanse of wall, while at Miss Cranston's dining rooms in Buchanan Street he created fresh stencil designs for each room, most of which were based on a delicate floral pattern. (Figures 85 and 86)

Immediately prior to carrying out the designs for the Eastman Kodak exhibition, Walton had been employed to transform the Dudley for the Photographic Salon of the Linked Ring. His designs here created a considerable reaction in the press, with critics divided as to their merit. Walton began by covering the walls of the Dudley with a textured fabric in burnt sienna, but it was the decorative motifs that attracted the most attention. Above the photographs Walton installed a 'decorative shelf fixed at cornice height' upon which he placed glass jars containing dried honesty pods.³⁸ At a lower level, in between the frames, he decorated the wall fabric with small images of leaves, flowers, and scrolls, and it was these that were described as 'the star turns of the entertainment.'³⁹ (Figure 87) Karen Moon points out that the 'colours of his 1897 Salon were in fact [close] to Whistler's exhibition at Dowdeswell's Gallery of 1886.'⁴⁰

Walton's display in the North Room at the New Gallery succeeded in depicting photography for the masses, although one critic pointed out that 'the insignificance of each was largely forgotten in the sense of dignity which was imparted by the decoration.'⁴¹ The competition photographs were perhaps important more as part of the overall visual display rather than having individual merit. From a distance the tiny images, most around two inches long, formed part of the broad decorative scheme.

³⁷ A borne settee is a circular, upholstered sofa, popular in Victorian times.

³⁸ Moon, *George Walton*, 60.

³⁹ 'The Photographic Salon,' *British Journal of Photography* Vol. 44 (October, 1897): 645.

⁴⁰ Moon, *George Walton*, 60.

⁴¹ A. Horsley Hinton, 'Eastman Exhibition,' *Artist: an illustrated monthly record of arts, crafts and industries*, Vol. 20 (December 1897): 617.

These pictures had been removed from their original context and given a new narrative as a small part of the North Room display. Kodak snapshooters were encouraged to take pictures to keep in photobooks which could then be shared with family members or close friends in an intimate, domestic setting, where explanations and discussions could take place. Family albums were often arranged in narrative sequences where meaning was created through a chronological order. However, this personal, domestic narrative was disrupted in the North Room where the photographs were reframed, literally and metaphorically, as part of a new, bigger story, which was the story of Kodak.

George Walton: The West Room

Walton succeeded in unifying the North Room with a combination of clever framing, a carefully judged colour scheme and the use of repeated stencil designs. In the West Room the decorative scheme could not have provided more of a contrast. Here he created a sumptuous, elegant backdrop for a comparatively small number of individually framed photographs. (Figures 88 and 89) Although the colours cannot be deduced from the black and white installation photographs, we do have written evidence of the scheme described in the *Outline of Arrangements*. Instead of white linen pulled flat against the walls, voluminous purple congress cloth hung in soft, expansive folds, its smooth, yet strong properties introducing an element of texture. The congress cloth was broken at regular intervals with gathered white cloth containing a bold border stamp with the word *Kodak*. All this was topped with elaborate valances which provided substance and offered a contrast to the otherwise flat surfaces of the photographs. It was, perhaps, fitting that purple should have been chosen as a theme colour with its traditional associations with royalty.⁴² As a result, there was an abstracted sense of luxury in the West Room, referencing royalty and wealth through the colour scheme while also referencing grand interiors with the swag and valance designs of the fabric.

⁴² The colour had long been connected to wealth and status because of the cost of the dye, until a synthetic substitute was manufactured in 1857 by William Henry Perkin.

In the West Room harsh light was not allowed to penetrate the large skylight, but instead a half-velarium gently diffused the daylight and presented the photographs at their best. Known to be a favourite device of Whistler, he had introduced a velarium for his show at the Dowdeswell Gallery in 1886 and again, later that year, in an exhibition of the Royal Society of British Artists in Suffolk Street. According to D. M. Bendix, Whistler claimed to have a patent on the velarium, although the application seems to have been abandoned.⁴³ He felt strongly that 'picture galleries lighted at the top are very good for the pictures but not for the spectators, and considered the velarium as a way around this problem.'⁴⁴ It became a popular feature at the exhibitions of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers of which he was the first president.

In place of the thousands of (largely) unframed images in the North Room, each photograph in the West Room was individually framed and carefully positioned within a small group, while the names of the photographers and titles of the works were printed clearly in the corresponding catalogue; even in the catalogue these photographs were differentiated through the use of a bold gothic typeface to list the photographers' names. The room was comparatively uncluttered with the floor space clear in order for the viewer's attention to be focussed solely on the walls. The West Room was designed to show what experts could achieve with a Kodak and these photographers had been carefully invited by Davison, often having been lent a Kodak specifically for the purpose, to dispel the belief that Kodaks were not designed for artistic purposes.

The West Room also contained photographs taken by members of the Royal family whose pictures hung together on the north wall, visible in the far end of Figure 88.⁴⁵ Eastman was particularly proud of the inclusion of these photographs, writing to his

⁴³ Deanna Marohn Bendix, *Diabolical Designs: Painting, Interiors, and Exhibitions of James McNeill Whistler* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 243.

⁴⁴ J. Pennell and E.R. Pennell, 'Whistler as a Decorator,' *Century Magazine* Vol. 83 (February, 1912): 500-513.

⁴⁵ It is worth remembering that 1897 was also the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

mother that ‘these pictures will give a big boom to the show.’⁴⁶ The press quickly picked up on their presence, with the *Telegraph* reporting that ‘all ranks from royalty downwards have yielded to the fascination of wielding the camera.’⁴⁷ Five members of the British Royal family submitted photographs including Princess Alexandra (later Queen Consort of King Edward VII) and two of her daughters, Princess Victoria and Princess Louise, Duchess of Fife. Princess Alexandra was the most celebrated royal photographer of her time and is ‘still considered to have been among the most gifted.’⁴⁸ She is reputed to have attended the London Stereoscopic School of Photography in Regent Street and certainly by 1889 possessed the Number 1 Kodak.⁴⁹ According to Frances Dimond, Alexandra was given a Number 4 Bull’s-Eye Special Kodak model in 1892, forming part of Eastman’s strategy to use public figures to endorse his products. As Queen Alexandra she continued to take part in Kodak exhibitions, including that of 1902 at the Kodak retail shop in the West Strand and one in 1906 in Oxford Street.

The celebrity status of the West Room can be directly linked to a series of advertisements from the 1890s featuring well-known figures using a Kodak. A particularly striking example can be found in the image of Lieutenant Robert Peary (1856-1920) on his trip to the North Pole in 1892. (Figure 90) Peary is shown alone on a sledge which is drawn by a number of powerful huskies. He is depicted as strong, brave and a survivor. He carries a small selection of provisions on his sledge, presumably all vital items for his survival, but these essential items revealingly include a Kodak, strapped tightly across his shoulder. The message is twofold: the Kodak can withstand cold, bumpy, perilous and harsh conditions; at the same time, anyone using a Kodak would have something in common with this inspiring explorer.

These advertisements, together with any response to them, need to be understood within the context of Polar exploration in the nineteenth century, which can be likened

⁴⁶ Eastman, letter to his mother, 13 October 1897.

⁴⁷ ‘Kodak Photographic Exhibition,’ *Telegraph*, 28 October 1897, 12.

⁴⁸ Frances Dimond & Roger Taylor, *Crown and Camera: The Royal Family and Photography, 1842-1910* (London: Penguin, 1987), 73.

⁴⁹ Dimond & Taylor, 73.

to the 1960s race to the moon. The Polar regions were a source of fascination for the public, with a number of expeditions departing from all around the world in the search of the North Pole. In Britain there was widespread enthusiasm for a British expedition led by Frederick George Jackson which departed in 1894 and arrived back shortly before the opening of the Eastman Kodak Exhibition in 1897.⁵⁰ Both Jackson's and Peary's expeditions were reported in the British press, but Peary attained greater notoriety largely through his association with Kodak. He took over two thousand photographs on his expedition in 1892 and these were circulated internationally, advertising both his name and that of Kodak. Eastman encouraged famous explorers to record and document places visited, particularly those which involved an element of the exotic or dangerous. Soon after the exhibition at the New Gallery, Rudyard Kipling travelled to Africa with a pocket Kodak, recording his expedition through journals and accompanying photographs.

The series of advertisements featuring Peary and other well-known figures linked directly with the theme of celebrity branding which was evident in the West Room. Although these photographs were not captured by intrepid explorers such as Peary or Kipling they were, nonetheless, taken by esteemed experts or those socially superior (in the case of the Royal family). In the West Room the visitor could both admire and learn by examining the highest level of expertise, or associate themselves with the nobility, with whom they now found they had something in common. By presenting exemplar pictures from Kodak negatives by eminent photographers, visitors were able to view models of what they could achieve.

The Linked Ring

The one hundred and fifty-three invitation photographs (all of which were enlarged) were submitted principally from experts associated with the Linked Ring Brotherhood, of which Davison was a founder member. It is crucial to understand how and why the Linked Ring came about in order to place the Eastman Kodak exhibition within the

⁵⁰ Ronald Savitt & Cornelia Ludecke, 'Legacies of the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition, 1894-1897,' *Polar Record: A Journal of Arctic and Antarctic Research* Vol. 43, no. 1 (January 2007): 55-66.

wider context of debates about photography in the late nineteenth century. The roots of this group can be traced to disputes that evolved in the 1880s, when Davison's impressionistic photographs were often unfavourably compared to the more technically sharp images of practitioners such as Henry Peach Robinson, referenced earlier as one of the judges of the Eastman Kodak exhibition. These debates indicated that photography was a suitable topic for serious analysis. The fact that it became a subject for discussion and encouraged such divergent viewpoints only served to raise the status of photography and increase its popularity.

From the outset, Davison's theories on photography were rooted in Impressionism and his images showed the 'use of selective focus to detach the subject from its surroundings.'⁵¹ This is evident, for example, in the image *Girls at a Well* of 1888. (Figure 91) In Davison's photograph the girls in the foreground are sharply focussed. Their buckets, the well, and the muddy foreground, are clearly defined, while the details of their dresses, the flowers on the seated girl's hat, and the spread of the second figure's hands are also sharp and precise. The contrast between these elements and the flat, softly-focused background is reminiscent of paintings of this period both at home and abroad. For example, two years earlier, John William Waterhouse had exhibited *The Magic Circle* at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. (Figure 92) Here the figure of the sorceress stands out clearly against a background of broad, flat brushstrokes, the details of her dress and the cauldron in vivid contrast to the ethereal background.

Davison's theories on photography supported those of his contemporary, Peter Henry Emerson (1856-1936) who had abandoned a career in medicine to practice photography professionally. Emerson was a founder member of the Camera Club, and elected to the Council of the Photographic Society in 1886. His influential publication, *Naturalistic Photography for Students* (1889), triggered a series of inflammatory letters in the photographic press between himself and Robinson. At this point Davison was acknowledged as a follower of Emerson, but after Davison delivered a lecture called

⁵¹ Mike Weaver, ed., *British Photography in the Nineteenth Century: The Fine Art Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 218.

Impressionism in Photography at the Royal Society of Arts in 1890, many critics reviewed the hierarchy of their relationship. Ultimately, Emerson attacked Davison for stealing his ideas, whilst criticizing his work in the press as 'artificial', 'false' and 'ordinary.'⁵²

This public controversy was followed swiftly by another, which resulted in the secession from the Photographic Society. During the Photographic Society exhibition of 1892, a series of events, including Robinson being ordered to leave and Davison's photographs being removed, culminated in Davison, Robinson and others resigning. They organised their own small show of sixty-eight photographs staged at the Camera Club headquarters in Charing Cross Road. From this point onwards Robinson, who had originally been a staunch adversary of Davison's, became not only a strong supporter but also a leader of the splinter group. The secession resulted in the creation of the Linked Ring Brotherhood with an annual exhibition known as the Photographic Salon.

The small exhibition of 1892 at the Camera Club followed the lead that had been set by the Camera Club of Vienna, whose international exhibition of 1891 was 'devoted exclusively to photographs which had been judged as works of art,' indicating the presence of a much wider movement.⁵³ Many of the prominent members of the Vienna Camera Club, including Heinrich Kühn, Dr. Hugo Henneberg and Professor Hans Watzek later joined the Linked Ring Brotherhood. Several of Davison's photographs were on show in Vienna in 1891, receiving considerable praise. The critics found that 'both his landscape and figure pictures make a truly artistic impression.'⁵⁴ In due course the Secession movement in photography spread further around the world, with the establishment of the Paris Photo-club, who held their first Salon in 1894, as well as the Photo-Secession of New York spearheaded by Alfred Stieglitz in February 1902.

⁵² *Amateur Photographer*, 29 November 1889.

⁵³ Margaret F. Harker, *The Linked Ring: The Secession Movement in Photography in Britain, 1892-1910* (London: Heinemann, 1979), 64.

⁵⁴ Harker, *Linked Ring*, 66.

The Linked Ring held their first Salon in October 1893 at the Dudley Gallery. The original Links were all men, with no women elected until 1900, and many members adopted a specific role such as Scribe or Master of Musick. The most senior office of High Executioner was initially held by Robinson, with Davison and the Dutch-born English photographer and painter, Henry Van der Weyde (1838-1924), acting as his deputies. These three had primary responsibility for the annual Salons, with Davison also the principal force behind the Eastman Kodak exhibition. This placed Kodak and the New Gallery at the epicentre of contemporary debates about photography and aligned the New Gallery with the more marginalised photographers of the day although they were leaders of the radical change.

Pictorial Dynamics in the West Room

Of the forty invited photographers represented in the West Room, nineteen were members of the Linked Ring Brotherhood.⁵⁵ A further six photographers were women, representing just under fifteen percent of the total with twenty photographs between them. Annan contributed thirteen images and Davison fifteen, while the Eastman Company displayed twenty images taken by unnamed photographers within their organisation. The most represented woman photographer was Frances (Fanny) Benjamin Johnston (1864-1952) with seven photographs, one of which was also included in a specially bound Souvenir Book. Their works were placed on the south, west and east walls. The west wall consisted of five main divisions, each holding between nine and twelve photographs, with a smaller section at each end of four or five images. The south and north walls each comprised one large, central section for around thirty images, with a smaller section either side, while the east wall was punctuated with the two doors. Visitors entered through the door at the north end of the east wall, the numbered photos commencing immediately on the left on entering.

⁵⁵ Linked Ring members exhibiting at the Eastman Kodak exhibition: Frederick Evans, Ernest Ashton, Bernard Alfieri, Harold Baker, Charles Moss, Frank M. Sutcliffe, Karl Greger, J. Craig Annan, Tom Bright, Alfred Horsley Hinton, George Davison, Charles Job, William Cadby, Viscount Maitland, H.P. Robinson, Thomas Manly, Eustace Calland, Frederick Evans, Charles Emanuel.

The effect of the design, with its distinct divisions of space, was to create readable sections where groups of photographs were carefully juxtaposed, all at eye level. Viewers were encouraged to examine photographs within clusters, most of which contained nine images. The relative importance of the images was established by the position within the group, with the centre spot being the prime place flanked by the other images and it is therefore illuminating to examine specific placements to interpret the hierarchy, as well as to analyse arrangements of subject matter and style.

An analysis of the two known installation images, together with supporting information from the catalogue, provides enough information to accurately establish the hang of a large section of the west wall of the West Room, as well as the north wall and a small section of the east. (Figure 93) The photographs that are visible on the west wall constitute numbers 104 to 147 and can be evaluated for placement, subject matter, style and frame design. Before examining this section, it is worth noting that, in addition to twenty photographs contributed by the Eastman Kodak company, George Eastman himself had one photograph on display at the exhibition. Hanging at number eighty-four, it was on the south wall, although it is tricky to work out more specific information without an installation shot of this section. Eastman was a keen photographer although, as has already been stated, quite shy of publicity for himself. His presence in the exhibition endorsed the product although perhaps the placement reflected a reticence to draw too much attention to himself.

The choice of Eastman's subject matter is worth consideration. Entitled *Arc de Triomphe*, it is almost certainly one of four photographs bearing that title now held at the River Campus Libraries, University of Rochester, although it is not possible to establish which of these four was selected. (Figure 94) All four images were taken using either a Number One or Number Two Kodak, therefore producing a round image of either two-and-a half or three-and-a half inches in diameter. Why Eastman should have chosen an image of a French, rather than English or American, architectural monument is a point of interest, especially as the Eastman Company photographs in the West Room were largely of London urban scenes. Two of Eastman's four photographs of the Arc de Triomphe depict the entire archway from the west, while the other two show

details of the sculptural groups on the east face, *Le Triomphe de 1810* by Jean-Pierre Cortot and the *Departure of the Volunteers of 1792*, also known as *La Marseillaise*, by François Rude. Both have the powerful language of classical allegory with one depicting Napoleon wearing Roman dress, being crowned by the goddess Victory, and the other showing him clutching ancient weapons. Although it is impossible to be certain which of these four photographs was on display in 1897 the subject matter might, to Eastman, have provided a quiet way to celebrate the success of the exhibition.

Returning to the photographs on the west wall, the first group on the left in Figure 89 corresponds to numbers 104 to 112 in the catalogue. The numbering runs from top to bottom, commencing top left. In order to give additional visual cues, the Eastman Company listing is included below in bold type, while a diagrammatic illustrates the specific placement of each image. (Figure 95)

- 104 Harold Baker: *Miss Lily Hanbury*
- 105 Major J.D. Lysaght: *Market Place in Brittany*
- 106 F.M. Sutcliffe: *Cornfield*
- 107 J. Craig Annan: *A Clyde Ferry*
- 108 Eastman Company: *An Altar Piece***
- 109 A Pringle: *Wave effect on a Norwegian Fjord*
- 110 Mrs. Francis Clarke: *Maytime*
- 111 H.P. Robinson: *Maiden Meditation*
- 112 A.R. Dresser: *Venice*

This section is probably representative of the arrangement throughout the room and combines portraits, genre pictures, architectural images, waterscapes and landscapes, therefore demonstrating how a Kodak could be used artistically and at a high standard to show all types of subject matter. Of the nine photographers in the group, three were members of the Linked Ring: Annan, Francis M. Sutcliffe and Robinson. Also represented here were Andrew Pringle, a Director of Kodak and one of Robinson's fellow competition judges, and the work of one woman, Mrs. Francis Clarke. There is one example from the Eastman Kodak company which is placed in the centre of the

group, a pattern that repeats in three of the four visible groupings on the west wall. This strategic insertion of Eastman Company photographs throughout the exhibition can be interpreted as part of the overall marketing campaign, providing a constant reinforcement of the company name and a demonstration of the level of achievement with a Kodak.

The wide variety of frames is also discernible in this installation photograph. Walton was responsible for framing all the enlargements, executed in a way that was 'specially designed to harmonise with the colour scheme and ornament of the room.'⁵⁶ He had designed and made frames since the late 1880s for his interiors company in Glasgow, creating mouldings and testing a variety of colour and finish. Walton collaborated with Annan in 1892 for an exhibition held at the new showrooms of Thomas Annan and Company at 230 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. The exhibition displayed Annan's photographs, together with the etchings of David Young Cameron (1865-1945), all of which had been inspired by an extended visit by the two men to Holland and Italy. Walton remodelled the showrooms for the exhibition, incorporating grey and green on the walls. He selected furniture and furnishings to compliment the exhibits and also designed frames for the photographs and etchings, thus illustrating his ability to conceive and carry out an entire scheme. One of Walton's frames from this earlier exhibition in Glasgow has been identified by William Buchanan and bears a striking resemblance to the broad, flat frames on many of the photographs at the Kodak exhibition.⁵⁷ (Figure 96) Although the majority of frames in the section from numbers 104 to 112 at the New Gallery exhibition are formed from wide, dark wood, A.R. Dresser's photograph of *Venice* provides a contrast with a frame painted white. The frame on the Eastman Company photograph in the centre, *An Altar Piece*, is broad and flat with a contrasting white strip around the inner and outer edges of each strut. This particular design was repeated throughout the exhibition.

⁵⁶ *Outline of arrangements*, 11.

⁵⁷ William Buchanan, *The Art of the Photographer J. Craig Annan, 1864-1946*, National Galleries of Scotland, 1992, 15.

The next section of photographs is particularly significant as it forms the centre section of the west wall. The Eastman Company exhibits are again highlighted in the list below in bold type, while Robinson's three photographs are indicated using red font in order to highlight their specific placement in the section. (Figure 97)

- 113 **Eastman Company: *Oxford Street in wet weather***
- 114 **H.P. Robinson: *Wayside gossip***
- 115 **Eastman Company: *Covent Garden***
- 116 Mrs Francis Clarke: *Lilac sunbonnet*
- 117 **H.P. Robinson: *Rusthall Quarry***
- 118 F.M. Sutcliffe: *On the beach*
- 119 **Eastman Company: *A hill road***
- 120 **H. P. Robinson: *Gathering bracken***
- 121 **Eastman Company: *Northumberland Avenue***

The centre section of the west wall was historically the most important place for paintings at the Summer Exhibitions, a point which will be discussed in greater depth in the subsequent chapter as this wall was particularly connected with the paintings of Burne-Jones. The display at the Eastman Kodak exhibition was precisely organised, balancing subject matter and photographer. What is especially noteworthy is that the four corner photographs in the group were taken by Eastman Company employees, while three photographs by Robinson ran horizontally through the group, with Robinson's *Rusthall Quarry* assuming prime position. This was also the first picture in the Souvenir Book, drawing attention to the importance of the photographer and this particular work. Although a visitor would not have known who took the photographs without consulting the catalogue, the salience of the image could be understood by the significance of the position within the group and the display as a whole. The prominence drawn to Robinson, and through him to the Photographic Salon, the Linked Ring and wider contemporary debates about artistic photography, could hardly be overlooked by visitors to the exhibition.

Debates about whether photography should be considered an art form had been forthcoming since the invention of the medium in the 1840s, but at this exhibition it was taken to a new level. How could photography be easy enough for the average amateur, as seen in the North Room, yet be considered high art in the hands of the experts as seen in the West? These questions can be addressed in part by examining the theories of certain practitioners during the second half of the nineteenth century. Oscar Gustave Rejlander (1813-1875), a Swedish photographer who produced mainly genre images, disseminated views about the peculiarity of the artist's mind which enabled a photographer or fine artist to view images from a superior perspective. He argued that 'it is the mind of the artist, and not the nature of his materials, which makes his production a work of art.'⁵⁸ Rejlander advocated the study of fine art as an essential part of training to become a photographer and particularly encouraged the assessment of light, mood and atmosphere in paintings.

Robinson, too, endorsed the study of the paintings of great masters and agreed in principle with Rejlander's interpretation of the artist's mind. However, Robinson refers to the artist's *eye* rather than the mind. In his publication, *Pictorial Effect in Photography* (1869), Robinson placed great emphasis on the importance of perception – the observation of the mind in the act of seeing. It is this, he posits, that separates an artist from everyone else. Robinson claimed that 'It is not difficult to see a view but it is not so easy to see a picture in it. It is this power of seeing a picture that makes the artist.'⁵⁹ His photograph of *Rusthall Quarry* depicts what he referred to as 'the spirit of nature,' an attempt to capture the poetic expression of the natural world.⁶⁰ (Figure 98) The heat from the summer's sun radiates off the rocks, with the crumbling sandstone and large boulders evoking distant memories of a time when this was a working quarry.

His viewpoint is carefully selected so that the observer of the photograph looks up, as he did, across and out of the top of the quarry and into the majestic trees on the edge

⁵⁸ Oscar Gustave Rejlander, 'What photography can do to art,' *Yearbook of Photography and Photographic News Almanac* (1867): 50.

⁵⁹ H.P. Robinson, *Pictorial Effect in photography: Being Hints on Composition and Chiaroscuro for Photographers, to which is added a Chapter on Combination Printing* (London: Piper & Carter, 1869).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

of the drop. The eye is drawn to the trees and to the sky that peeps through the branches. Robinson's ability to construct the image and to choose the exact moment to record are part of his skill as a photographer. Although in his early days with a camera, he used the technique of splicing together a number of negatives to create a composite image, he also took one-shot naturalistic frames, as with *Rusthall Quarry*, which conveyed the beauty of a particular moment in a natural landscape.

A second picture from this group on the west wall, *Wayside Gossip*, is more typical of Robinson's pastoral scenes as it contains a small group of figures. (Figure 99) His subject is the relationship of the group to the landscape and their connection with the natural order of things. Two women, in peasant dress, are seated on a low wall next to a river, while a third wanders by, presumably stopping to gossip. The landscape is full of picturesque features including the stone wall overgrown with vegetation, a winding path that disappears beyond clumps of trees, a fast-flowing river and a wooden mooring on the far side. Robinson makes great use of body language and conveys a narrative through pose, gesture and facial expression. Looking more closely at the photograph, the third figure seems to be interrupting the two women seated on the wall. Her defensive stance, with hands behind her back, as well as her enquiring glance towards them, seem to be asking whether she could sit down and join them.

Despite *Wayside Gossip* being a more characteristic photograph for Robinson, it was *Rusthall Quarry* which was included in the Souvenir Book. This perhaps suggests that the aim was to show that a Kodak, in the hands of a skilled expert, could take a photograph of pure landscape without the need for additional figures or man-made objects.

The next visible section (see Figure 100) comprises:

- 122 J. Craig Annan: *A Dutch head gear*
- 123 Mrs Carine Cadby: *Flower study*
- 124 Miss McNicol: *Hounds*
- 125 Thomas Manly: *Japanese Screen*
- 126 Eastman Company: *A busy street***
- 127 George Davison: *Low Tide*
- 128 Miss Frances B. Johnston: *Portrait*
- 129 H.M. Smith: *By the river*
- 130 Miss McNicol: *A group of hounds*

As with the layout of the section comprising numbers 104 to 112, this group is characterised with an Eastman Company photograph placed in the centre, with what appears to be an identical frame to number 108. The rhythmic repetition of selected elements served to unify the display. There was a balance between symmetry, where individual pictures might be subordinate to the overall aesthetic, and careful individual placements which highlighted certain photographs, such as the Eastman Company images.

The final section incorporates numbers 131 to 142, a slightly larger group comprising twelve photographs rather than the group of nine in all three previous sections. This manipulation of the regular pattern was necessary to fit in with the physical sections created by the curtain drops but also aided the narrative. A small sub-section of five photographs at the end of the west wall (numbers 143 to 147) were taken by non-Royals of Royal subjects, thus leading smoothly into the display on the north wall. (Figure 101)

- 131 Harold Baker: *Miss Lily Hanbury*
- 132 George Davison: *Hampton Church*
- 133 Charles Moss: *Mist on the River*
- 134 Thomas Manly: *Olivia*

- 135: A.R. Ashton: *Shoeblack*
- 136: Eastman Company: *Hill Sheep***
- 137: Major J.D. Lysaght: *At Youghal*
- 138: Major J.D. Lysaght: *Log Hauling at Interlaken*
- 139 Frances Johnston: *A Street Scene*
- 140 Eastman Company: *River at Evening***
- 141 Mrs Carine Cadby: *Honesty*
- 142 George Davison: *Lady and Child*

Once again, the Eastman Company contribution takes the centre spot, as well as a place to the right but on the same horizontal.

The Souvenir Book

Despite the prominence given to Eastman Company photographs in the exhibition, none were included in the Souvenir Book. This was designed as a commemorative exhibition book showcasing the work of particular photographers. The preface to the Souvenir volume states the aims:

This edition de luxe of 14 photographs by eminent photographers is a souvenir of the Eastman Photographic Exhibition, held at the New Gallery, Regent Street, London, from 27th October to 16th November, 1897. It is aimed chiefly to exemplify some of the pictorial applications of the Kodak and film photography. The pictures, without exception, are Kodak film pictures, and the assortment is specially arranged to illustrate a few of the various classes of subjects which can all be effectively exploited by Kodak photography.

Landscape, seascape, architectural pictures, portraiture pure and simple done at home, portrait head and shoulders, portraiture of three-quarter figure, portraiture of the whole figure with drawing-room surroundings, will be found

pictorially exemplified in this little volume.⁶¹

On the walls of the West Room the photographs were printed on albumen paper, but in the Souvenir Book all images were printed as photogravures, a negative transferred to a copper plate which could then be manipulated like an etching. The fourteen images were printed as photogravures by Annan at his family's Glasgow firm. He was an expert at the process having studied with one of its inventors, Karel Klič (1841 – 1926), in Vienna before returning to the family business. The photogravure allowed for creative working and resulted in a wide range of tones in the finished product. The process increased in popularity during the later nineteenth century as an 'effective tool for the pictorialist' photographer, as it was possible to achieve a delicate tonal scale which suited the naturalistic style.⁶² Crucially this meant that the developing process was not handled by Kodak and allowed for subtle changes to be made to the original. At the bottom of each photogravure, the phrase 'Kodaked by...' with the name of the photographer, demonstrated how the brand name had become absorbed into colloquial language as a verb.

All genres of photographs were included in the Souvenir Book, setting standards and norms as well as suggesting suitable subjects for enthusiastic hobbyists: there were examples of landscape, seascape, interior, portraiture, and twentieth-century life. The fourteen photogravures included three each by Davison, Annan, Robinson and Andrew Pringle, with one each from Adolphus H. Stoiber (1853 – 1916), Eustace Calland (1865-1959), Alfred Horsley Hinton (1863 – 1908) and Fanny Johnston. The latter was the only woman represented in the Souvenir Book. She was a long-term family friend of Eastman, an established American photographer and writer who ran her own studio in Washington D.C. from 1894.⁶³ She had originally submitted photographs for the amateur competition but, as Eastman explained to his mother, Johnston 'had written a

⁶¹ *Kodak Portfolio: Souvenir of the Eastman Photographic Exhibition 1897. A Collection of Kodak Film Pictures by Eminent Photographers* (London: Eastman Photographic Materials Co., 1897).

⁶² See 'The Story of Photogravure,' *Art of the Photogravure*, accessed 12 July 2023, <https://photogravure.com/story-of-photogravure/>.

⁶³ Bettina Berch, *The Woman Behind the Lens: The Life and Work of Frances Benjamin Johnston 1864-1957* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

complaining letter to us because we had discovered at the last moment that... she was not eligible for the competition – we put her pictures in the loan exhibition room (where the Royalties are) and used one of her negatives for a reproduction in a swell souvenir book.⁶⁴ (Figure 102)

It is revealing that the photograph selected was one of her portraits, although she exhibited seven works altogether including at least four which were exterior urban or village scenes. The choice of a portrait to represent the work of the only female photographer in the Souvenir Book can be construed as endorsing the concept that this was the most appropriate genre for a woman. Johnston had, in fact, started her career as a society portrait photographer, moving on to take photographs of senior political figures in the United States government. Bettina Berch, in her biography of Johnston, depicts her as a radical, single-minded career woman who was markedly different to many of her contemporaries. After her early days as a portrait photographer, she worked successfully as a photojournalist and combined her written skills with striking images of landscape and architecture, as well as taking a series of pictures at the Hampton Institute, an establishment devoted to the education of African Americans.

In her article, 'What a woman can do with a camera,' Johnston persuasively argued that photography was an appropriate and lucrative profession for a woman.⁶⁵ However, rather than implying that it was an easy route to independence, she stressed that a woman would require 'personal qualities, good common sense, unlimited patience ... a talent for details, and a genius for hard work.'⁶⁶ She suggested that experience was more important than education as very few of the schools of photography were geared to training the professional business person, but rather focussed on supporting the amateur. In common with both Rejlander and Robinson, Johnston advocated the study of fine art to achieve the desired effects in a photograph and recommended in

⁶⁴ Eastman, letter to his mother, 29 October 1897.

⁶⁵ Francis B. Johnston, 'What a Woman can do with a camera,' *Ladies' Home Journal* Vol.114, no.10 (September 1897): 6-7.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

particular the close observation of works by Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Reynolds, Romney and Gainsborough.⁶⁷

Johnston's photograph in the *Souvenir Book* was not only a portrait, but the sitter was also a woman. A short description of the image accompanied the photograph:

This profile portrait has been specially taken by Miss Johnston for the Kodak portfolio. It furnishes another example of the successful use of the lighting of ordinary rooms for portraiture. The textures of the different surfaces represented are effectively rendered in this picture.⁶⁸

It is helpful to compare Johnston's portrait with one taken by Annan, also included in the book. (Figure 103) Annan contributed three photographs to the *Souvenir Book*, two images of a young woman and one of a child, all of which also hung together as framed images on the south wall at numbers sixty-nine, seventy and seventy-one, in close proximity to Eastman's picture at number eighty-four. The woman in Annan's two photographs has been identified as Mrs. Grosvenor Thomas, wife of the Australian-born Scottish artist who was a peripheral member of the Glasgow Boys.⁶⁹ The interior is Annan's house, Glen Bank, in Lenzie, Scotland, which was decorated by Walton. He depicts a close three-quarter view of Mrs. Thomas seated against the backdrop of a patterned curtain which incorporates peonies and twisting foliage. The viewer's eye is drawn to the contrasting patterns and fabrics, as well as the shapes created by the dress and the sitter's body. The striped design of her bodice is sharp and distinct, revealing the feminine shape beneath, but the image also contains specific attributes attached to the feminine ideal: softness seen in the wavy hair, billowing sleeves and gentle smile, and passivity in the way that she is seated with hands placed gently upon her lap. Her neck and hands are exposed, showing bare flesh, the curve of her neck

⁶⁷ Johnston, 'What a Woman can do with a camera.' 7.

⁶⁸ *Kodak Portfolio: Souvenir Book*.

⁶⁹ Buchanan, William, ed., *J. Craig Annan: Selected Texts and Bibliography*, World Photographers Reference Series Volume 6 (New York: G.K. Hall, 1994), 139.

another reminder of feminine beauty. The viewer gazes upon her and she gazes into space, seemingly lost in thought.

Johnston's image is also set inside, probably taken in her studio in New York. However, the sitter appears to be dressed for the outdoors with her voluminous fur cape and large hat complete with ostrich feathers and floral accessories. These accessories were almost certainly from a selection in Johnson's studio as they are visible in other photographs from this period, one a self-portrait and the other a photograph of Ethel Reed. (Figure 104) In both these shots the sitter is looking out at the camera in a rather challenging way, the distinct plumage of the hat highly visible. The hat is wonderfully theatrical and recalls the *picture hat* which was popularised at the end of the eighteenth century and seen in paintings by Thomas Gainsborough, such as that of *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*. (Figure 105) These decidedly elaborate, wide-brimmed hats returned to high fashion in the later nineteenth century, sometimes appearing in images of the Gibson Girl, as described earlier in this chapter. The Gibson Girl's hair was often piled up high on the head in what was known as a *vignette* and the hat would balance on top of this. Johnston took a photograph in 1899 which she named the *Gainsborough Girl*, directly referring to the hat. (Figure 106) In this photograph the sitter seems to be wearing the same fur cape and possibly even the same hat as seen in the Souvenir Book photograph.

Whereas Annan's sitter is the known wife of a close friend, Johnston's model is unknown and untraced. Despite searching, there appears to be no record of her name, nor are there any other images that can be identified of the same woman. She is in almost complete profile, with eyes looking straight ahead. In contrast to Annan's portrait, very little is given away about the body of the sitter, enveloped as it is in the great fur. Her hands and neck are not visible – the only flesh on view is that of her face, while on her head the marvellously dramatic hat draws the eye upwards. The woman has an aura of mystery about her. As she gazes impassively at an unseen, distant point, she appears to be in complete control. Johnston wrote a number of articles about theory and practice in photography and suggested that, in a portrait, it was essential to 'avoid emphasizing peculiarities of a face either by lighting or pose: look for curves

rather than angles and straight lines, and try to make the interest in the picture centre on what is most effective in your sitter.⁷⁰ In this photograph she creates a tension between the dramatic headdress and the apparently calm, serene face of the sitter. This tension creates the interest and invites close scrutiny from the viewer.

The Souvenir Book was printed in limited numbers as a commemorative record of the exhibition. Eastman was extremely pleased with the publication and also more than satisfied with the success of the exhibition as a whole, writing to his mother that 'everybody is astonished at its size and extent as well as its beauty.'⁷¹ The English press was supportive and Eastman claimed that 'the papers all over the country are giving us splendid notices.'⁷² In particular the exhibition succeeded in disposing 'of the idea that Kodaks cannot be used for the very highest class of work,' largely through the works in the Invitation room and the Souvenir album.⁷³ As discussed earlier, many of the leading photographers whose work was on display in the West Room had, immediately prior to this, shown their work at the Photographic Salon of the Linked Ring. These were eminent pictorial photographers whose reputation could have been compromised had their Kodak pictures been considered anything other than skilful. Such was the success of the exhibition, however, that it transferred to the United States in January 1898 for a two-week run at the Academy of Design in New York, incorporating a wider selection of photographs from American photographers.

There is no doubt that Eastman and Davison would have succeeded in finding a venue for their exhibition in London, but it seems certain that a large component of its success can be attributed to the choice site of the site at 121 Regent Street. Although later Kodak exhibitions were held in their London retail shops, at this point there were no such premises that were suitable. The interior spaces of the New Gallery, with their versatility, size and décor, suited the distinct areas that were required for such an eclectic exhibition, while the prestige and reputation of the Gallery assisted in

⁷⁰ Johnston, 'What a Woman can do with a Camera.'

⁷¹ Eastman, letter to his mother, 27 October 1897.

⁷² Eastman, letter to his mother, 29 October 1897.

⁷³ Ibid.

promoting the exhibition. Furthermore, contracting George Walton to realise the designs in the North and West Rooms added considerable prestige and connected both Kodak and the New Gallery to one of the more avant-garde artists and designers of the day. This commission was to provide a life-long partnership between Walton and Davison, with Walton employed to create the interiors of a number of Kodak showrooms worldwide, as well as major residential work for Davison at The White House, Shiplake and Wern Fawr, Harlech, both in 1908.

The Eastman Kodak exhibition contributed significantly to the history of the New Gallery as an exhibition space. Conceived as part of the Kodak worldwide advertising and marketing campaign, the site was given fresh meaning as a place of contemporary discourse about photography and its place in the wider art world, a debate which continues to this day. In 2021 a conference entitled *The Art of Photography* strove to 'educate and promote photography as fine art,' indicating that it is very much still a current issue.⁷⁴

Linking the New Gallery and photography, firstly through the Eastman Kodak exhibition and subsequently with the exhibitions of the Royal Photographic Society, confirmed the site as one which endorsed marginalised, lesser art forms, as was also highlighted in the previous chapter on the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. However, where the Arts and Crafts makers were intent on underlining the significance of the individual craftsman working with their hands, and struggled to equate commercialism with craft, there was no such conflict at the Eastman Kodak exhibition. Kodak was a commercial enterprise and Eastman valued and marketed a camera which promoted ease of use. The amount of labour involved was specifically designed to be limited, although, as has been argued in this chapter, the ability to take artistic photographs was nevertheless possible for those people with an artistic eye or mind.

The emphasis on ease of use to produce artistic results recalls the Whistler: Ruskin trial of 1878 when Whistler initiated an action for libel as a result of Ruskin's criticism of the

⁷⁴ *The Art of Photography Conference 2021*, accessed 19 September 2023, <https://www.artphotoconference.com/about/>.

lack of artistic labour in the artist's work. Having visited the inaugural exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery, Ruskin famously declared that he 'never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.'⁷⁵ At the same exhibition, Ruskin encountered the work of Burne-Jones for the first time and immediately took an interest in the paintings of the younger man. As was posited in the Introduction, Burne-Jones represented the most significant artist for the New Gallery throughout its first decade of operation. It was entirely appropriate, therefore, that the New Gallery was the venue for Burne-Jones's Memorial Exhibition in the winter of 1898 to 1899. The next chapter investigates this exhibition, as well as the decade-long relationship between the gallery and Burne-Jones, and explores the narratives created by the display of his works in the gallery spaces.

⁷⁵ John Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain*, Letter 79, July 1877, (London: George Allen, 1884).

Chapter 4: The Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition at the New Gallery, December 1898 – April 1899

The Edward Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition provides a definitive example of how Machado's metaphor of the palimpsest can be extended to explore ways in which a temporary installation can inscribe fresh meanings to an exhibition space. This exhibition represented the culmination of eleven years of the constant presence of Burne-Jones and his art at the New Gallery. As the final re-writing of the palimpsest, this layer co-existed with, and modified, all previous encounters with his art within these spaces. The Memorial Exhibition, therefore, reveals a multifaceted array of layers that expands the metaphor of the palimpsest to an extraordinary degree. Machado argues that 'the past pervades the building and the building itself becomes the primary level of the context of intervention.'¹ In this chapter the 'primary level' is defined as the first encounter with Burne-Jones's art at the Summer Exhibition of 1888, with all subsequent exhibitions building upon this initial encounter to produce multiple layers, each one creating 'a new form of an old story.'²

The synergetic relationship of Burne-Jones and the New Gallery proved to be invaluable to both artist and venue. After the resignation of Comyns Carr and Hallé from the Grosvenor, Burne-Jones was the major supporter of their new venture in Regent Street. Together with Watts and Alma-Tadema, Burne-Jones led the secession from the Grosvenor and, in so doing, helped to establish the immediate reputation of the New. He was a close personal friend of Comyns Carr and Hallé, who appointed him to the Consulting Committee for the Summer exhibitions from the outset. Between April 1888 and the close of the Memorial Exhibition in April 1899, the New Gallery was the primary location both to view and to buy the work of Burne-Jones: he exhibited at ten of the eleven Summer exhibitions, at one Autumn exhibition and at the first five Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibitions, showing in total one hundred and eighty-seven artworks on these sixteen occasions. In the Winter of 1892 to 1893, the New

¹ Rodolfo Machado, 'Old Buildings as Palimpsest,' *Progressive Architecture* Vol. 11 (1976): 49.

² *Ibid.*

Gallery hosted a solo exhibition of nearly two hundred works by Burne-Jones, while there were a further two hundred and twenty-five art works on view at the Memorial Exhibition.³

As a result, both the artist and his art were embodied within the gallery spaces, discussed by visitors and friends, written about in articles and reviews, and recorded in the exhibition catalogues. The preservation and co-existence of these previous layers makes the analysis of the Memorial Exhibition especially challenging, with the role of memory playing an important part in visitor response. The arguments of Jakub Krukar, as presented in his article 'Walk, Look, Remember: The Influence of the Gallery's Spatial Layout on Human Memory for an Art Exhibition,' provide an analysis of memory and attention within a museum context.⁴ Krukar's exploratory experiment to evaluate the influence of spatial organisation concludes that a visit to a museum or exhibition utilises 'two types of memory playing a significant role: the memory of objects, and memory of their spatial location.'⁵ He suggests that object-based memories are largely 'influenced by the picture's perceived salience,' whereas location-based memories 'are dependent on the pictures' position in the gallery and therefore derive from initially designed curatorial narrative.'⁶ Krukar's premise will provide a point of departure for assessing what previous memories – both of specific paintings as well as earlier displays - visitors brought to the Memorial Exhibition and how these memories had the power to influence their interpretation of the space and the art displayed within it.

When the exhibition opened on 31 December 1898 the New Gallery was visually transformed into a world of medieval romanticism with Burne-Jones's artworks providing a rich layer of colour, tone, shape, and size. This was a unique occasion, both a celebration of Burne-Jones's life's work and a poignant reminder that there would be no more art from the hand of the artist. The exhibition commemorated his

³ Some catalogue numbers comprised between 25-35 studies mounted on a screen, so the real total was nearer 330.

⁴ Jakub Krukar, 'Walk, Look, Remember: The Influence of the Gallery's Spatial Layout on Human Memory for an Art Exhibition,' *Behavioural Science* Vol. 4 (2014): 184.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Krukar, 'Walk, Look, Remember,' 183.

achievements as ‘a painter, designer, decorator, colourist, and draughtsman,’ whilst also providing a singular opportunity for the public, critics, and other artists to view his art en-masse for the final time.⁷ Burne-Jones had died just six months earlier, on 17 June, and the exhibition was organised with impressive speed. Although the historical retrospective exhibition of a living artist was a reasonably familiar format by the end of the nineteenth century, the commemoration of a recently deceased artist was more unusual.⁸

Robert Jenson addresses the development of the retrospective in his book, *Marketing Modernism*, maintaining that this type of exhibition was not deemed necessarily good for sales by dealers such as Paul Durand-Ruel, as ‘it was commonly believed that the buying public preferred new art to older work.’⁹ However, the single artist show could prove useful ‘for determining provenances and providing the stamp of authenticity on a work of art.’¹⁰ Both the Grosvenor and New Galleries held solo exhibitions of the work of Watts, while the New also hosted the aforementioned Burne-Jones retrospective.¹¹ The Royal Academy incorporated retrospectives of deceased British artists within their annual Winter Exhibitions from 1870 onwards, but these formed part of a larger show of works by Old Masters and often combined the work of two or more deceased British artists. In 1883, for example, the art of both Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Linnell (both of whom had died the previous year) was on display as part of the Winter Exhibition, while a retrospective of Millais (died 1896) was incorporated into the Winter Exhibition in 1898, again alongside the Old Masters. This marks the Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition at the New Gallery as a fresh, alternative format in exhibition history.

Of prime importance in the analysis of the Memorial Exhibition is a book of photographs taken by Frederick Hollyer (1838-1933) which acts as ‘a mode of memory,

⁷ M.H. Spielman, ‘Art Exhibitions,’ *Graphic*, 7 January 1899, 18.

⁸ See Introduction, footnote 61.

⁹ Robert Jenson, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siecle Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 109-110.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ The Grosvenor Gallery held an exhibition of Watts’s work in 1881, while the New Gallery exhibition took place in the winter of 1896 to 1897.

of recollection' with which to reconstruct the event, particularly when assessed alongside the catalogue and newspaper reviews.¹² Hollyer was a friend of Burne-Jones, William Morris and many others in the same artistic circle. He was both an engraver and a photographer who established a practice taking photographic reproductions of artworks using the wet collodion process, with the reproductions then sold as luxury prints. In addition, Hollyer took a number of informal portrait photographs of prominent artists in their studios and in outdoor settings with family and friends.¹³ Originally a member of the Photographic Society of Great Britain, Hollyer resigned from the Society along with H.P. Robinson, George Davison and others in 1892 to join the Linked Ring, exhibiting in the Invitation room of the New Gallery at the Eastman Kodak Exhibition of 1897.¹⁴

The photographs of the Burne-Jones exhibition comprise twenty-one images, laid on card, some of which are close ups of one or two paintings (Figure 107), while others are taken at a wider angle and provide a visual record of the interior of the Gallery at the exhibition. (Figure 108) Hollyer made only six copies of the album, one of which was on display at the recent Edward Burne-Jones exhibition at Tate Britain and now belongs to Peter and Renate Nahum.¹⁵ In addition to this quantity of visual evidence for the Memorial Exhibition, the catalogue featured an essay penned by Comyns Carr which surveyed Burne-Jones's life and work, referencing the artist's homage to Botticelli, Michelangelo and Rossetti, and declaring 'his every picture a painted poem.'¹⁶ In Comyns Carr's opinion, Burne-Jones's greatest achievement was to combine the 'design of Michelangelo with the colouring of Titian.'¹⁷ These fragments of

¹² Michael Shanks, *Archaeology*, accessed 17 September 2022, <https://mshanks.com/archaeology/>. The photographs taken by Frederick Hollyer are available to view at <http://www.leicestergalleries.com/19th-20th-century-paintings/d/edward-coley-burne-jones/14647>.

¹³ Many of these are now held at the National Portrait Gallery.

¹⁴ Hollyer was a member of the Linked Ring between 1892 and 1909, taking the position of Centre Link on five occasions. He eventually rejoined the Photographic Society and exhibited with both organisations.

¹⁵ I am grateful to Peter and Renate Nahum for showing me the book in their home. Their copy was originally owned by George Howard, 9th Earl of Carlisle, a close friend of Burne-Jones. It was on view for the duration of the exhibition *Edward Burne-Jones*, Tate Britain, 24 October 2018 to 24 February 2019.

¹⁶ J. Comyns Carr, *Exhibition of the Works of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart.*, Introductory Essay (London: R. Clay, 1898).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

information about the exhibition enable us to build a picture of the event with which to reveal 'the past's resistance to decay, its presence.'¹⁸

The Central Hall

The remodelling of the New Gallery for this exhibition extended to all five spaces. The Central Hall became a medieval castle with the vast Arras tapestries from Stanmore Hall, Middlesex, hanging off the Balcony railings into the cavern below, causing a writer for *The Times* to comment that the Hall had never before 'looked so magnificent as it now does.'¹⁹ All six tapestries were removed from the walls of William Knox D'Arcy's dining room at Stanmore for the first time since their installation in 1896. Although several had been previously shown as individual items for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, such as *The Attainment* (now in the collection of Jimmy Page) in 1893, the Memorial Exhibition display provided a unique opportunity for the public to view the complete set together.²⁰

The tapestries had been designed by Burne-Jones to be seen above eye-level in the Stanmore Hall dining room and the presentation at the New Gallery carefully echoed that particular display. On entering the Hall at the New Gallery, the first tapestry on view, on the west wall opposite the entrance, depicted the *Knights of the Round Table summoned to the Quest*. (Figures 109, 110 and 111) This served to establish Burne-Jones's skill as a designer, as well as his fascination with the theme of the Quest for the Holy Grail. The subject of the Quest, along with the wider stories of King Arthur, was a topic to which Burne-Jones returned repeatedly during his working life in a variety of media. The final work to be seen on leaving the New Gallery for Regent Street was the culmination of the series, *The Attainment*, which had been specially designed to fit beside and above a doorway at Stanmore Hall. (Figures 112, 113 and 114) The rich colours and textures provided by the tapestries complemented the 'three large red and richly gilded lamps, formerly belonging to the Doge's Barge' which had been bought by

¹⁸ Shanks, *Archaeology*.

¹⁹ 'Burne-Jones at the New Gallery,' *The Times*, 30 December 1898, 5.

²⁰ William Knox D'Arcy (1849-1917) bought Stanmore in 1886 and commissioned William Morris to rework many aspects of the interior.

the New Gallery for the Venetian Exhibition (in the Winter of 1894 to 1895) and were now permanent fixtures within the Hall.²¹ A final photograph of the Hall depicts the south wall which held three tapestries, *The Failure of Sir Gawain*, *The Arming and Departure of the Knights* and *The Ship*. (Figures 115, 116 and 117)

The Hall also contained one hundred and twenty-six drawings and studies mounted on two long screens situated below the tapestries. It is reasonable to conclude that the Directors adopted the use of screens having seen how successfully George Walton employed them to display large numbers of small photographs at the Eastman Kodak exhibition the previous autumn.²² In a similar way, the screens provided a practical solution to the display of smaller works at the Burne-Jones exhibition, whilst also functioning to carefully define the space in the Hall, partially hiding the entrances to the additional rooms. The remainder of the studies and drawings were displayed on the Balcony, a more intimate space which provided a backdrop for sixty-three studies and designs ranging from chalk, pencil, and crayon drawings, to oils and watercolours, as well as silverpoint studies. There are no specific photographs of the Balcony although it can be glimpsed in the images of the Hall. The drawings and studies provided visitors with the opportunity to appreciate Burne-Jones's skill as a draughtsman, as well as the time he spent perfecting minute details of hands, heads, glances and gestures.

In an article for the *Magazine of Art*, Philip Burne-Jones described his father's painstaking preparation for all major artworks.²³ As well as sketches from life, he created 'little models in wax or other material...from which further drawings were made, and it was from such small models that he studied the lights and shades on [for example] the throne of "King Cophetua."' ²⁴A further selection of drawings and studies, some for unfinished works, was on display concurrently at the Burlington Fine Art Club

²¹ 'Winter Exhibition at the New Gallery,' *American Architect and Building News* Vol. 63, no. 1210 (4 March 1899): 70.

²² See Chapter Two.

²³ Philip Burne-Jones, 'Notes on some unfinished works of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bt.,' *Magazine of Art* Vol. 25 (January 1900): 159-167.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

in Savile Row, indicating just how prolific the artist was in his preparatory work. Indeed, Comyns Carr referred to 'the countless books of studies he has left behind him, studies which prove with what untiring and absorbing industry he approached every task.'²⁵

As Elizabeth Prettejohn highlights in her essay, 'Burne-Jones: Intellectual, Designer, People's Man,' Burne-Jones's route to becoming an artist was entirely unorthodox and did not include conventional academy training in drawing.²⁶ Having attended Oxford to read Theology, Burne-Jones encountered fellow-student Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who persuaded him to become an artist.²⁷ Colin Cruise traces the development of Burne-Jones's drawing from the early pieces, which showed the influence of Rossetti and which were often independent graphic works in their own right, through to later works which revealed the encouragement of Watts, who 'liberated Burne-Jones from Rossetti's medievalism.'²⁸ Cruise continues by including a discussion on Burne-Jones's admiration for Dürer and the work of the Old Masters, as well as his designs for stained glass which resulted in 'a highly stylised linear description of figures with compacted compositions.'²⁹ Although a large number of drawings and studies were on view at the New Gallery, the comic drawings (such as that of William Morris at the loom in Figure 50) were not included in this instance.

The three main gallery spaces, the West, North and South Rooms, contained the large oil and watercolour paintings, and the exhibition as a whole revealed Burne-Jones's 'gift of refinement in design, his genius in poetic feeling, and wealth as a colourist.'³⁰ The visual metamorphosis of the gallery interiors was apparent for all visitors to see and constituted the outermost layer of the palimpsest. However, a closer examination of the use of space, the order of hang and the direction of visitor flow, exposes a

²⁵ Quoted in Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Burne-Jones: Intellectual, Designer, People's Man,' in *Edward Burne-Jones* edited by Alison Smith (London: Tate, 2018), 13.

²⁶ Prettejohn, 'Burne-Jones,' 14.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Colin Cruise, "'An impassioned imagination": Burne-Jones as a Draughtsman,' in *Edward Burne-Jones*, edited Alison Smith (London: Tate, 2018), 8.

²⁹ Cruise, 'Burne-Jones,' 95.

³⁰ 'The Picture Galleries,' *Lloyds Weekly*, 8 January 1899, 4.

myriad of underlying layers below the immediate visual transformation which created a complex, interweaving pattern of narratives at the exhibition.

Hierarchy of Spaces

By 1898 the New Gallery had been operating for over ten years and a particular hierarchy of spaces had been established within its five rooms. Indeed, visitors, artists and exhibition organisers had long accepted that there were more - and less - prestigious positions for artworks to be displayed, as is illustrated in John Sunderland and David H. Solkin's essay 'Staging the Spectacle' on the Royal Academy exhibitions at Somerset House.³¹ The authors analyse the hang of the Great Room at the Summer Exhibition of 1784 in detail and draw attention to 'The most important position in the room as a whole,' which was 'that above the fireplace on the adjacent east wall, with which the visitors came face to face upon entering from the Ante-room.'³² It was here that the hanging committee annually displayed a major history painting by a senior Academician, which on that occasion was taken with Benjamin West's vast *Moses receiving the Laws on Mount Sinai*. (London: Royal Academy) West's large, commanding paintings were again in evidence in 1792, the year of his election as President of the Royal Academy. While the *Triumph of Moses over Pharaoh* dominated the east wall, the west wall (again in centre position) held *The Institution of the Order of the Garter*. The arrangement of the display asserted the authority of the new President and his works, both of which were commissions from King George III.³³

In a similar way there was a position at the New Gallery which was considered the most prestigious: the west wall of the West Room, which was opposite the visitor on entering from the Central Hall. The significance of this wall, as well as the overall hierarchy of interior spaces, was firmly established at the inaugural Summer Exhibition

³¹ David H. Solkin and John Sunderland, 'Staging the Spectacle,' in *Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House, 1780-1836*, edited by David H. Solkin (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2001), 25.

³² Solkin and Sunderland, 'Staging the Spectacle,' 25.

³³ See Mark Hallett, '1792: A Guided Tour,' in Mark Hallett, Sarah Victoria Turner and Jessica Parker, eds., *Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition: A Chronicle, 1769-2018*, (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2018), accessed 28 April 2023, <https://chronicle250.com/1792>.

of 1888, with three large oils by Burne-Jones taking central place on the west wall. Two previously unseen paintings from the Perseus series, *The Rock of Doom* and *The Doom Fulfilled*, flanked *The Tower of Brass*. (Figure 118) In *New Gallery Notes* Henry Blackburn drew further attention to these works by including illustrations of them, which, together with enthusiastic reviews from both *The Times* and the *Athenaeum* gave a clear message about the status of the display.³⁴ It was inevitable that Burne-Jones's paintings should be prominently hung since his connection to the New Gallery was crucial to its success. By 1888 he was also a well-established artist and an Associate Academician with a number of wealthy clients keen to view and buy his works.³⁵

Burne-Jones's paintings dominated the west wall at seven out of ten further summer exhibitions with *The Star of Bethlehem* (1891), *The Pilgrim at the Gate* (1893), *Love Among the Ruins* (1894), *The Fall of Lucifer* (1895), *The Dream of Lancelot* and *Aurora* (1896), *The Pilgrim of Love* (1897) and *St George* (1898). The continuous cycle of Burne-Jones's paintings placed repeatedly on this wall ensured that his art became synonymous with this spot in the eyes of the viewer. The art assumed a saliency because of its placement, while the place assumed a saliency because of the artist, and as a result the viewer engaged with both 'memory of objects, and memory of their spatial location.'³⁶ The hierarchy of spaces was reinforced through comments by the press as well as through subtle suggestions in the accompanying exhibition catalogues. The *New Gallery Notes* for the Summer Exhibition of 1891, for example, simply listed most works by title and artist's name, with a one-line description for a few selected works. However, the catalogue entry for Burne-Jones's *The Star of Bethlehem* was followed with a lengthy paragraph, largely descriptive, but certainly enough to make the visitor pause by the painting while reading.³⁷

³⁴ Henry Blackburn. *New Gallery Notes* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1888).

³⁵ Burne-Jones was elected to Associate Academician in 1885.

³⁶ Krukar, 'Walk, Look, Remember,' 184.

³⁷ Blackburn, *New Gallery Notes* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1891).

On the three occasions when Burne-Jones had no large work suitable for this wall, the position was taken by Watts in 1889 and 1892, and Alma-Tadema in 1890, both members of the Consulting Committee and full Academicians. Newspaper and journal reviews continued to draw attention to the West Room wall despite the absence of Burne-Jones's work. Although the *Pall Mall Gazette* complained that there was 'none to be seen of Edward Burne-Jones' in 1889, the writer swiftly moved to focus on Watts' *Fata Morgana*, drawing attention to the fact that it hung in the honoured position in the centre of the west wall.³⁸ In fact there were twenty-three studies by Burne-Jones on the Balcony, largely for the *Wheel of Fortune*, *Arthur in Avalon* and *The Depths of the Sea*. However, place took precedence over object in this instance, with the oils in the main exhibition space being given more attention by the majority of reviews.

Two additional high-ranking positions were located in the centre of the north wall of the North Room and the south wall of the South Room. Again, these were opposite the visitor's entrance to each room from the Central Hall. During the course of the summer exhibitions these additional prime spots were taken by well-established, high-profile artists such as Millais, Alma-Tadema, Watts, Charles Napier Kennedy and Hallé himself. The syntax of the gallery layout resulted in the West, North and South rooms being approached from the Hall and, after viewing the displays, visitors returned to the Hall once again. The Central Hall, therefore, constituted the common reference point for visitors, as well as the only access point to reach the other exhibition spaces. The rhythm of going in and out of the spaces created a repetitive movement which was echoed in the recurring patterns, motifs and themes in the work of Burne-Jones.

The Three Prime Display Spots: Narrative Links

The crucial question for this chapter is how these three highly prized spaces were used at the Memorial Exhibition, the ultimate opportunity to see Burne-Jones's body of work within the venue. An evaluation of Hollyer's photographs indicates that the painting for the centre of each wall was selected first, with the display built around the

³⁸ 'The New Gallery and the Grosvenor,' *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1 May 1889, 3.

initial installation, forming an aesthetically-driven hang. There is no written evidence to show why particular paintings were selected for the centre spots, although it is likely that Comyns Carr and Hallé used their own expertise and judgement, as well as their own preferences, and in doing so expressed their personal interpretation of Burne-Jones's art. The way that the artworks were placed and presented gave visual expression to Comyns Carr's assertion that it was Burne-Jones's life's work 'to find fitting utterance in line and colour for dreams of beauty that in England at least had till now been shaped only in verse.'³⁹

In the South Room, the centre of the south wall featured *The Days of Creation*, six watercolour panels mounted in the original frame designed by Burne-Jones. (Figure 119) In the West Room, *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* held the prime position, while in the North Room, the north wall was dominated by *Arthur in Avalon* flanked on either side with portraits of the artist by Watts and Philip Burne-Jones. (Figures 120 and 121) What follows is a critical analysis of the choice of these three artworks and the way they were displayed to the visitor. The paintings are considered not only as independent pieces on the walls of the gallery, but also as a distinct group bound together both narratively and thematically, presented in a way which resonated with contemporary discourse concerning religion and wider spiritual beliefs.

Roland Barthes's statement that narrative 'is present at all times, in all places, in all societies; indeed, narrative starts with the very history of mankind,' provides a point of departure for considering the possible connections between the works.⁴⁰ The implication of this statement is that narrative is a primal form of communication and collaboration, that it is used to articulate life's experiences in a meaningful way. Theodore R. Sarbin posits a related point, which he calls the 'narratory principle.'⁴¹ He asserts that narrative provides meaning for human beings and that we 'think, perceive,

³⁹ Comyns Carr, Joseph, 'Introductory Essay,' *Exhibition of the works of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart.*, New Gallery, 1898-1899, 18.

⁴⁰ Stephen Heath, *Roland Barthes, Image-Music-Text: Essays Selected and Translated by Stephen Heath* (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 79-124.

⁴¹Theodore R. Sarbin ed., *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1986), 8.

imagine, interact and make moral choices according to narrative structures.⁴² Since these two papers, dating from 1975 and 1986 respectively, theories of narrative have been explored and debated in a variety of fields including literature, psychology, media and film studies, and neurology. More recently, it has become a tool used by exhibition organisers within museums and galleries, particularly those which have an educational agenda.⁴³

Sarbin's theories are the result of a number of experiments carried out in the field of psychology. He argues that 'human beings impose structure on the flow of experience.'⁴⁴ Taken within the context of an art exhibition, this means that the visitor would both look for and create meaning from what is encountered. It follows that the juxtaposition and presentation of artworks become tools for the visitor, who is given additional signs such as lighting, height of display, labelling and catalogue instructions from which to create a narrative.

The catalogue for the Memorial Exhibition clearly instructed the visitor on the appropriate route through the rooms, commencing with the South Room which contained 'Pictures, Cabinet Size, in oil and watercolour,' before moving to the 'Pictures of the Middle Period' in the West Room, and finishing with 'Later Pictures, including "Arthur in Avalon"' in the North Room.⁴⁵ Burne-Jones's artistic output was presented in broad chronological order with the hang dominated by a desire for aesthetic balance. Visitors did not just view the works, but also moved around them, peering from different angles, while possibly engaging with other visitors on the way, their movement creating 'much more of a dance' than a rigid route through the spaces.⁴⁶ It is worth recalling, at this point, the arguments posited by Pearson and McLucas, outlined in the Introduction, of a triumvirate of host, ghost and visitor, where the

⁴² Sarbin, *Narrative Psychology*, 8.

⁴³ See for example Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012) and Fiona Romeo, 'Can an Exhibition be a Story?' accessed 10 June 2019, <http://www.foeromeo.org/conferences-etc/can-an-exhibition-be-a-story..>

⁴⁴ Sarbin, *Narrative Psychology*, 9.

⁴⁵ *Exhibition of the Works of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart.*, Arrangement of the Exhibition. (1898).

⁴⁶ Romeo, 'Can an Exhibition be a Story?'

significance of the visitor to activate the performance can be likened to the viewer at an art exhibition.

A number of visitors to the Memorial Exhibition would have taken the prescribed route through the gallery spaces, catalogue in hand, and on a conscious or subconscious level, could have linked the single standout painting in each of the three main rooms through an understanding of the hierarchy of spaces, through memory of what had hung in these positions at previous exhibitions, or through recognition of particular artworks as salient. The reviews, if read prior to a visit, would also have suggested to the viewer what was worth particular scrutiny. The *Athenaeum*, *The Times*, *Standard*, *Daily News* and *Leeds Mercury* all directed attention to both place and object by praising the major work in each of the West and North Rooms, *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* and *Arthur in Avalon*, with *King Cophetua* 'hanging in the (highest) place of honour in the West Gallery.'⁴⁷ All these publications, except the *Daily News*, also included favourable commentary of the *Creation* panels in their reviews.

Both chronologically and thematically the three paintings were presented in an order which made sense. Starting with the story of the Creation in the South Room, moving onto the depiction of a man in the prime of his life in the West, and concluding with a painting showing death or eternal sleep, these works linked to form a narrative framework. They represent, on the one hand, the early, middle and late stages of Burne-Jones's artistic career, yet also depict the mortal cycle of birth, life and death. These two frameworks each divide into three sections, referencing one of the oldest and most widely-used forms of narrative, the three-part structure. Usually acknowledged to have its roots in Aristotle's *Poetics* (335 BC), narratives in the form of books, films, presentations and theatrical performances, continue to use the broad concept of beginning, middle and end to define and craft stories today.⁴⁸

Throughout the nineteenth century the population encountered the three-part structure particularly in the form of books and at the theatre. The three-volume novel,

⁴⁷ 'Sir E. Burne-Jones: Exhibition at the New Gallery,' *Daily News*, 30 December 1898, 6.

⁴⁸ Aristotle's *Poetics* is the earliest surviving work of Greek dramatic theory, dating to around 335 B.C.

known as the 'triple-decker,' originated in Edinburgh in 1821 with the publication of Sir Walter Scott's *Kenilworth*.⁴⁹ The format was originally devised to ensure publicity and profitability, with each of the three volumes selling at ten shillings and eleven pence, but it was so successful that this remained a standard format until the 1890s. So legitimised was this structure that, in Trollope's lengthy satirical novel, *The Way we Live Now* (1875), when the character of Lady Carbury contemplates launching a writing career to help her out of near bankruptcy, her first thoughts are about the length of the novel. She quickly decides that 'it must be in 3 volumes, and each volume must have three hundred pages.'⁵⁰ Having successfully completed her first book, she then proposes to write a second novel, aptly entitled *Wheel of Fortune*, bearing the same title as one of Burne-Jones's major works, which will be discussed in due course.

On the stage the three-act play was one of several standard models, with George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* (1894) and Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) two of the great commercial successes of the decade. A brief analysis of the latter demonstrates how each act contains specific elements which help drive the plot forward. In the first Act the major characters are introduced, with a potential complication presented: that Jack Worthing was adopted, having been discovered abandoned in a handbag as a baby. In Act 2 the complication develops further as two young ladies each find themselves engaged to 'Ernest,' while Act 3 provides the (happy) resolution.

The format has been developed in contemporary screenwriting, where theoretician Syd Field's (1935-2013) paradigm of the 'three-act structure' provides a framework for writers to craft and develop plots for the cinema.⁵¹ Field refers to the three acts as the 'set-up,' the 'confrontation' and the 'resolution,' and for each section he suggests certain focal points to push the narrative action forward.⁵² However, in contrast to the

⁴⁹ Kelly J. Mays, 'The Publishing World,' in *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*, edited by Patrick Brantlinger and William B. Thesing (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 16.

⁵⁰ Anthony Trollope, *The Way we Live Now* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 365.

⁵¹ Syd Field, *Screenplay, the Foundations of Screenwriting* (New York: Bantam Dell, 2005 [1979]), chapters 7 to 11.

⁵² *Ibid.*

experiences of an audience of film or conventional theatre, or the reader of a book, the visitor to an exhibition takes part in a relatively non-linear, non-static experience.

At the Memorial Exhibition the first act, or section, was represented with the *The Days of Creation* in the centre of the south wall of the South Room. (Figure 122) At this point they were in their original frame as one unit. Burne-Jones clearly valued not only the artworks, but also the particular presentation which he had devised. His own insistence on the integrity of the paintings within the frame was emphasised with an inscription on the back of each of the six watercolours stating:

This picture is not complete by
itself but is No. X of a series of
six water colour pictures represent
-ing the Days of Creation which
are placed in a frame designed
by the Painter, from which he
desires they may not be removed.' (Figure 123)

Unfortunately, when the work was bought by an American art collector, Grenville L. Winthrop in 1934, the panels were reframed individually in plain mouldings. The original frame has been lost, while the fourth panel was stolen in 1970 when on loan to Harvard University.

In 1898 the panels were owned by Alexander Henderson, later Lord Faringdon, one of Burne-Jones's prominent patrons. When first shown to the public, at the inaugural Summer Exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, they were met with a largely positive reception with most of the reviews focussing on the skill involved in portraying the intricate designs of the angels' feathers as well as the novel idea of using crystal balls.⁵³ The *Daily News* suggested that the 'idea for the panels seems to have been taken from the ancient "speculum" of the diviners,' although Martin Harrison and Bill

⁵³ Sidney Colvin, 'The Grosvenor Gallery,' *Fortnightly Review* Vol. 21, no. 126 (June 1877): 825.

Waters argue that the tarot card in the British Museum, attributed to Mantegna, shows the figure of an angel holding a sphere full of stars.⁵⁴ (Figure 124)

The six watercolour panels depict the story of the creation of the earth and its life forms. Burne-Jones had previously incorporated the theme of the Creation in designs for a stained-glass window at Waltham Abbey (1860) and at Middleton Cheney, Northamptonshire (1870). In 1863 he also produced a series of watercolours on the subject for the Dalziel brothers' *Illustrated Bible Gallery*. As with so many of his themes, Burne-Jones returned to work on earlier ideas, often testing them out in a variety of media.

The watercolour panels at the Memorial Exhibition presented the story of the creation of the world by the hand of God, here represented with angels, each one holding a mystic ball containing an image of that day's creation. The seventh day of rest is shown within the sixth panel, with an angel playing the harp at the feet of the sixth angel. (Figure 125) This is the only example of a man-made item visible in any of the images. The inclusion of music in this final panel is pertinent to Burne-Jones's art and it plays a great part in many other works including *Laus Veneris* (1873-8), *The Golden Stairs* (1880, Tate Gallery), *Love Among the Ruins* (1870-3, Private Collection), *Le Chant d'Amour* (1865, Museum of Fine Art, Boston) and *The Lament* (1865/6, William Morris Gallery). In the *Creation* panels he links music to God, as it is the angel rather than man who is the musician.

In the same way that the early chapters of a book, or the first section of a play, set the scene for the continued action, so the stage is set in *The Days of Creation*. All the natural elements of the world appear within the mystic balls and the sheer beauty of that world is evident – it has colour, shape, texture, movement and music. The inclusion of the angel(s) from the previous day(s) in each subsequent panel provides a certain rhythm. A writer from the *Athenaeum*, who had visited the work in Burne-Jones's studio in June 1876, suggested that this partial repetition of poses and attitudes

⁵⁴ 'The Grosvenor Gallery,' *Daily News* 2 May 1877, 6. Martin Harrison and Bill Waters eds., *Burne-Jones* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1973), 110.

was reminiscent of Blake's poetry, for example *Songs of the Morning*.⁵⁵ The use of repetition also highlighted the natural order of the world with its emphasis on simplicity and lack of chaos.

In addition to setting the scene, an introduction reveals the main characters to the audience. In the sixth and final panel, Adam and Eve are depicted within the angel's mystic globe, naked, innocent, gently touching hands. The angels from the five previous days are grouped together, 'their wings intermingling in an intricate glory of feather and colour and sheen.'⁵⁶ Adam is slightly taller and more muscular than Eve; he is not as androgynous in depiction as other male figures in Burne-Jones's work. Beyond the surface image, this panel draws attention to potential future conflict, as behind the apparently innocent figures of Adam and Eve the serpent winds its way around the tree and leers into Eve's face. The physical scene is displayed but an additional, psychological element is introduced with the knowledge that there are difficulties to come. The protagonists of the narrative, Adam and Eve, are unaware of their future predicaments, in contrast to the viewer who is well aware of the story. As a result, this seemingly benign, graceful, decorative panel reveals an underlying tension that adds an additional layer of meaning to the painting.

If the South Room suggested the first stage of the narrative thread within the exhibition, the West Room represented the significant second section, incorporating the main action and the development of characters. It was here that *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (then owned by the Earl of Wharncliffe) assumed the prize position, a painting that was widely considered to be one, if not *the*, most important artwork executed by Burne-Jones and eventually bought for the nation in 1900. (Figure 126) From the moment it was first exhibited in 1884 at the Grosvenor Gallery the painting excited rapturous reviews, with Alfred Lys Baldry later pronouncing it 'the most ambitious and the most exacting of his works.'⁵⁷ The reputation of both painting and artist spread quickly at home and abroad, with its inclusion at the Paris Exposition

⁵⁵ 'Mr. E. Burne-Jones's Pictures,' *Athenaeum*, 24 June 1876, 866-7.

⁵⁶ Colvin, 'The Grosvenor Gallery,' 820-833.

⁵⁷ Alfred Lys Baldry, *Burne-Jones: Masterpieces in Colour* (London: T.C. and E.C. Jack, 1909), 51.

Universelle in 1889 earning Burne-Jones the award of the Legion d'honneur. There had been an awareness of his art in France since 1869, when Philippe Burty (1830-1890) included Burne-Jones in an article for the *Gazette Beaux Arts*, 'presenting him as the young champion of the (Pre-Raphaelite) movement.'⁵⁸ Comyns Carr extended Burne-Jones's reputation in his role as correspondent for the French journal *L'art*, in which he wrote extensively on Burne-Jones after the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery. Through the repeated exposure Burne-Jones became widely admired by Symbolist painters such as Fernand Khnopff, who gave an account of first seeing the painting of *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* in front of which he spent 'hours ... in long contemplation of this work of intense beauty.'⁵⁹

The painting shows Burne-Jones drawing on several sources. In the exhibition catalogue the entry was accompanied with three verses from a lengthy Elizabethan ballad which was published in Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), those that focus on the maid and her reaction at being chosen by the king:

But marke, what hapned on a day,
As he out of his window lay,
He saw a beggar all in grey,
The which did cause him paine.

The beggar blusheth scarlet red
And straight againe as pale as lead,
But not a word at all she said,
She was in such amaze.

At last she spake with trembling voice,
And said, O King, I doe rejoyce
That you will take me for your choice,

⁵⁸ Laurence des Cars, 'Edward Burne-Jones and France,' in *Edward Burne-Jones: Victorian Artist Dreamer* edited by Stephen Wildman and John Christian (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), 25.

⁵⁹ Fernand Khnopff, 'A Tribute from Belgium,' *Magazine of Art* Vol. 23 (January 1899): 522.

And my degree's so base.⁶⁰

Furthermore, there is a brief written reference to the adaptations of both Shakespeare and Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Shakespeare adjusted the original name of the beggar maid, Penelephon, to become Zenelephon in *Love's Labour's Lost*, while Tennyson wrote a sixteen-line poem called *The Beggar-Maid* in 1842.

In addition to these literary sources, Burne-Jones draws on artistic precedents for his composition. As has been noted by a number of scholars, there is a strong resemblance in composition between this painting and Mantegna's *Madonna dell Vittoria* of which Burne-Jones owned a reproduction.⁶¹ (Figure 127) In Mantegna's altarpiece the Virgin is placed high on a carved throne and reaches down with her hand to touch the head of a kneeling knight. Parallels have also been drawn between Burne-Jones's painting and Carlo Crivelli's *Annunciation* of 1486, particularly for the richness of colour, the architectural framework and the positioning of the choristers.⁶² (Figure 128) A further link to Mantegna can be seen in the clothes of the beggar maid which bear a striking resemblance to the lowcut tunic worn by St John the Baptist in *The Virgin and Child with Magdalen and St John the Baptist*, which was viewable in the National Gallery during the nineteenth century. (Figure 129)

Returning to the structure of the three-part narrative, the main plot typically introduces a complication or challenge which must be overcome, such as the case of mistaken identities in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The king in Burne-Jones's painting has a moment of epiphany when he realizes that, not only has he fallen in love for the first time, but that the woman in question is socially and materially inferior to him, and therefore not the imagined choice of bride. It is clear that she has the moral high ground as is reflected in her raised physical position within the picture frame. Her

⁶⁰ Alison Smith, 'Apprentice to Master: 1856-1870,' in *Edward Burne-Jones* edited Alison Smith (Tate, 2018), 60-61.

⁶¹ See, for example, Tim Barringer, Jason Rosenfeld and Alison Smith, eds., *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant Garde* (London: Tate, 2012), 222.

⁶² See, for example, Wildman and Christian, *Burne-Jones*, 197.

inner grace, beauty, and serenity are also superior, but these qualities are not immediately obvious.

The use of an architectural backdrop in the composition provides yet more layers of meaning, both compositional and narrative, as well as symbolic. Compositionally, it gives proportion and design to the image, providing a framework within which the protagonists are placed, and dividing that space into readable sections. The figures are pushed right up to the surface of the picture and therefore very close to the viewer, which directs the viewer's attention in a specific way. Both king and maiden, along with the two boys above, are enclosed and protected within the structure in a way that strongly resembles the sanctity and safety depicted in many images of Madonna and Child set within architectural frameworks. Stephen Wildman refers to an earlier watercolour version in a private collection, dating to 1883, where the architecture seems secondary to the figures.⁶³ However, in the final version the emphasis changes with a highly visible roof which makes the space feel enclosed and tightly-packed. Although the moment seems to be a private one, of devotion from king to maiden, yet the figures are totally exposed to the viewer, particularly as they are positioned in such close proximity to the front of the image.

The final result can also be interpreted as rather oppressive. The tight architectural framework, which on the one hand protects the figures placed within it, also acts to capture them in situ. The maid is placed in the top right corner of the structure with the balustrade behind her and the king below. Should she want to leave, she would either need to climb over the high balustrade or the king would be required to physically move himself out of the way; she is essentially trapped in her corner. The anemones in her hand could represent unrequited, or perhaps unasked for, love. This painting, like so many of Burne-Jones's works, is open to a myriad of interpretations despite its reliance on narrative sources.

⁶³ Wildman and Christian, *Burne-Jones*, 253.

From a narrative perspective, the architecture reveals a sense of place, even if it is largely wrought from Burne-Jones's imagination. The Elizabethan ballad opens with a reference to the King's homeland in 'Africa,' with the rugs, the citrus trees, and various details in the ornate carving alluding to an exotic interior, although the glimpse of landscape in the background appears more Italian than African. The crown, however, was specially designed and crafted by W.A.S. Benson, not necessarily created to belong to any particular place or time. The intricate gold carving of the architecture also provided symbolic meaning, referencing the king's status and wealth, while acting as an extraordinary contrast in texture and colour to the of the skin of the maid.

Moving on to the final section of the three-part narrative, this was represented with the unfinished *Arthur in Avalon* hanging on the north wall of the North Room and on public display for the first time. (Figure 130) This was the painting on which Burne-Jones had been working for nearly twenty years and Georgiana Burne-Jones records that he was working on the canvas during the evening of his death.⁶⁴ For many viewers the later works of an artist were more significant than the earlier as they were closer to the master himself, and therefore closer to perfection.

The particular presentation of this enormous painting (279 cm x 650 cm) - at the short end of the longest room and taking up almost the entire wall - is reminiscent of one-painting shows that became popular from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, although the practice had begun earlier. One of the earliest examples dates to 1781 when John Singleton Copley (1738-1815), an American artist working in London, rented the Great Room at Spring Gardens in which to exhibit the *Death of the Earl of Chatham* (Tate Gallery on loan to National Portrait Gallery since 1968). Although Copley had been elected to the Royal Academy in 1779, he chose to take control of the presentation of this painting to the public, organising the publicity, display and finances of the venture. Over 20,000 people paid one shilling to see the work and to receive a pamphlet with details of the artist and the painting.⁶⁵ A print in the British Museum

⁶⁴ Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones* (London: Macmillan, 1904), Vol. 2, chapter 28.

⁶⁵ Michelle Facos, ed., *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Art* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 75.

shows a small crowd of visitors standing in front of the vast painting which dominates a small room covered in swags of curtains. (Figure 131) The visitors are a combination of men and women, all well-dressed, with sombre expression, some clutching the aforementioned pamphlet, presumably collected on their way in. In the print the experience of the visit and viewing is presented in a similar way to that of attending the lying-in-state of a public figure.

In more recent history to the New Gallery was the display of Holman Hunt's *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple* in 1860. The art dealer Ernest Gambart (1814-1902) bought both the painting and copyright, in instalments, for the vast sum of £5,500 and then organised the one-painting show at the German Gallery in New Bond Street.⁶⁶ W.M. Rossetti maintained that this event 'doubtless promoted the present increase of single-picture exhibitions.'⁶⁷ The painting proceeded to tour a number of sites around the country, including Leeds, Truro, Manchester, Dublin and Carlisle, promoting the concept of the solo show. There is no doubt that if *Arthur in Avalon* had been hung on one of the long walls of the North Room its impact would have been limited as it would have been merely one of many paintings along this wall, albeit the largest one. As it was, it hung in almost splendid isolation, with the two portraits of Burne-Jones acting as sentries guarding the artist's final work.

On the viewer's left hung a portrait by Watts, painted in 1870 when Burne-Jones was thirty-seven years old. (Figure 132) His face looms out of the darkness, with piercing eyes challenging the viewer. Watts chose to paint the man himself, rather than defining him as an artist. By contrast, Philip Burne-Jones's painting of his father shows him working at an easel in his home studio. (Figure 133) The portrait was completed during the months immediately before Burne-Jones's death in 1898 and depicts an aging artist, slightly stooped, with long white hair. On the easel, Burne-Jones is working on a study for *The Attainment*, the final of the series of the Holy Grail tapestries, while in the

⁶⁶ Ernest Gambart was a Belgian-born art dealer, publisher and exhibition organiser, prominent in London during the nineteenth century.

⁶⁷ Dana Arnold and David Peter Corbett eds., *A Companion to British Art: 1600 to the present* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 340.

background is an unfinished oil of *Perseus and the Sea Nymphs or the Arming of Perseus* (1877, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart). The portraits together represent the man and the artist: in the one, Burne-Jones engages with the viewer, while in the other he is depicted completely absorbed in his work.

Taken in consecutive order the three paintings hanging in the Gallery's primary positions represent the beginning, middle and end of Burne-Jones's life and career, and also fit the structure of a three-part narrative. The *Creation* panels signify the introductory act, *King Cophetua* embodies the main plot, the highlight of a life and career, while *Arthur in Avalon* reveals the final section and end of life. Sarbin's theory, that humans construct narratives quite naturally to create meaning, suggests that the visitor was likely to have interpreted the paintings in this way.

The Three Prime Display Spots: Thematic Links

In the same way that a play is divided into acts and subdivided into scenes, with these divisions also forming part of a complete composition, so these three paintings at the Memorial Exhibition could be observed both as cumulative steps of a narrative, or as different aspects of a single theme. Rosalind Krauss argues that museum display derives from the Renaissance Palace, where the visitor proceeds 'from space to space along a processional path that ties each of these spaces together, a sort of narrative trajectory with each room the place of a separate chapter, but all of them articulating the unfolding of the master plot.'⁶⁸ Perhaps not a master plot, but when analysed in close juxtaposition there is an overriding theme that emerges from all three paintings: that of the proximity between the spiritual and physical worlds, their interdependence, which at times makes it hard to distinguish between the worldly and the ethereal in Burne-Jones's paintings.

Choosing to re-interpret the three paintings within this theme adds a further layer of meaning to the exhibition spaces. If the paintings engage with contemporary discourse,

⁶⁸ Rosalind Krauss, 'Postmodernism's Museum without Walls,' in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, edited by Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne, 343.

the site itself becomes a space for this discourse and therefore takes on additional significance. In the *Creation* panels Burne-Jones depicts the physical world as created by celestial beings, with that world gradually revealed inside the crystal balls held by the angels, suggesting strong links to mysticism. This physical world is the one occupied by Burne-Jones, yet as an artist he creates an additional world, that of his imagination, and it is this that he draws upon for his art. The links between the spiritual and physical worlds, as well as the imagined world, are tightly bound in this highly original rendition of the Creation story.

The theme of the proximity between the spiritual and physical worlds is also evident in the other two key paintings in the West and North Rooms. *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* depicts a man overcome with feelings of love for a young beggar girl. In the painting there is a colourlessness and stillness about her that is almost death-like, which strongly suggests the spiritual realm rather than the physical world that surrounds her. The differences in wealth and status are pushed aside and the king renounces his material wealth for the higher value of love. Within Christian texts, love is a key attribute of God and is a gift directly bestowed by him. In *Arthur in Avalon*, Arthur is presented surrounded by the three Queens and other attendants, sleeping in the vale of Avalon. According the catalogue entry 'King Arthur is not dead but [is in] another place; and men say he will come again.'⁶⁹ This appears to be a direct suggestion that Arthur's spirit has departed to a different realm while his physical body remains on earth, waiting to be roused again.

These broad themes of spirituality resonated with late Victorian discourse on religion, mysticism and the occult, in a time when a number of less conventional beliefs challenged conventional religion. It is worth recalling Burne-Jones's admiration of and association with Watts in order to suggest ways in which Burne-Jones may have been exposed to trends in spirituality and mysticism, as well as the ways in which these ideas could be transferred to a canvas. Barbara Bryant outlines Watts's interest in 'mystical and other-worldly matters' in her essay 'G.F. Watts and the Symbolist Vision,' and

⁶⁹ *Exhibition of the Works of Edward Burne-Jones*, 1998.

points out that he became an Honorary Associate Member of the Society for Psychical Research in March 1884, the first of several artists to do so.⁷⁰ By 1887, Ruskin had joined the Society, with Leighton becoming a member in 1890. The activities of the Society were focussed on investigating the wide range of spiritualist and paranormal phenomena that were claimed by a large number of people challenging conventional religion and looking for answers elsewhere. Bryant claims that Watts's paintings of the 1880s 'reinforce the view of him as a painter of other-worldly concerns.'⁷¹

Of relevance as well are the beliefs of the Theosophical Society, established in 1875 in New York by Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891), who was based in London from 1885. Her publication of *The Secret Doctrine* coincided with the opening of the New Gallery in 1888 while the following year, in *The Key to Theosophy*, she details the seven principles of man, explaining that the physical body is the lowest form of being, merely a temporary body that is occupied while the soul or spirit resides on earth.⁷² Although there is no direct connection between Burne-Jones and Theosophy, his art engages with concepts that were closely linked to their beliefs, particularly that of the parallel spirit and physical worlds. Within his art there is a repeated theme, or motif, of the creation of an alternative world of some form or other, whether spiritual, historical, romantic, mythological or completely imaginative. At the Memorial Exhibition the worlds portrayed by Burne-Jones within his paintings extended from the canvas to transform the gallery spaces as a whole, similar to the 'ritual spaces' that Brian O'Doherty refers to when comparing art galleries to churches, tombs and sacred spaces that 'eliminate awareness of the outside world.'⁷³

Robert de la Sizeranne (1866-1932) described his interpretation of the world that Burne-Jones occupied and which was revealed through his paintings:

⁷⁰ Barbara Bryant, 'G.F. Watts and the Symbolist Vision,' in *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and Watts: Symbolism in Britain, 1860-1910*, edited by Andrew Wilson and Robert Upstone (London: Tate, 1998), 73.

⁷¹ Bryant, 'Watts,' 75.

⁷² Helena Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (London: Theosophical Publishing Company, 1889).

⁷³ Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of Gallery Space* (California: University of California Press, 1999), 8.

Burne-Jones seems to have been born in the fifteenth century. All these years he has slept in the depths of some enchanted place... His repose there sheltered him from the changes of fashion... And then he awoke in the midst of a world older by three centuries than himself. That is the secret of his originality, his bewitching charm!⁷⁴

Walking into the New Gallery during the Memorial Exhibition signified an immersive experience, where the visitor was able to enter and enjoy Burne-Jones's 'magical world of painted romance.'⁷⁵

Pictorial Dynamics: West wall of the West Room

As has been already established, the prime display spot stood in the centre of the west wall of the West Room. This next section investigates the extended display on this wall to evaluate the canvasses both as distinct individual works of art and as part of a specific group display to reveal fresh interpretations of the paintings. (Figure 134) On either side of the centrally-placed *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* hung two paintings on the theme of Venus: *Laus Veneris* (1873-8) and *The Mirror of Venus* (1875). Above the Venus paintings were two smaller artworks from the *St. George* series: *The Princess tied to the Tree* and *The Princess Sabra led to the Dragon*, both dating to between 1865 and 1867. Flanking the sides were *The Wheel of Fortune* (1883) and *The Depths of the Sea*. (1886) These paintings were carefully grouped together to balance each other aesthetically in terms of picture size, orientation and colour, which was in keeping with the hanging scheme throughout the Memorial Exhibition. To emphasize the significance of this group of seven works further, a curtain was draped above and around the paintings, creating a dramatic effect which cannot have been lost on the audience.

The use of a curtain to mark out this particular grouping of works can be interpreted in a number of ways. Firstly, it suggests the nineteenth-century practice of displaying art

⁷⁴ Robert de la Sizeranne, 'A tribute from France,' *Magazine of Art* Vol. 23 (January, 1899): 513-520.

⁷⁵ M.H. Spielman, 'Edward Burne-Jones at the New Gallery,' *Graphic*, 7 January 1899, 18.

in private houses and smaller galleries, where intimate settings were emphasised through the use of comfortable armchairs, curtain swags, plants and ceramic decoration to emulate the country house. Although Comyns Carr and Hallé had largely moved away from this more claustrophobic type of interior decor, they did provide seating at the gallery and often decorated the Central Hall with plants in and around the fountain. The curtain may also (again) be referencing the Eastman Kodak exhibition, where George Walton used voluminous curtains to transform the West Room, as analysed in Chapter Three of this thesis.

The curtain also links directly to the theatre and would have resonated with a theatre-going public. Both Hallé and Comyns Carr had a number of connections with the performing arts in London and the Continent, with the former being the son of Charles Hallé, the famous pianist, conductor, and founder of the Hallé orchestra. Comyns Carr was an established writer, theatre critic and playwright, whose *King Arthur* was staged in 1895 at the Lyceum, with Ellen Terry and Henry Irving performing in the lead roles; Burne-Jones designed both the sets and costumes for the production. (Figure 135) The curtain at the Memorial Exhibition is reminiscent of the proscenium arch of a theatre set, creating a window around the spectacle on the wall and encouraging a particular viewpoint for the visitor. Furthermore, in the same way that an actor could break through the arch – the symbolic ‘fourth wall’ - and speak directly to the audience, replicating the role of the Chorus in Greek tragedies, so there is one single figure from the group of paintings which looks directly out to the viewer to engage attention: the mermaid from *The Depths of the Sea*, the painting on the far right of the collection. (Figure 136)

The inclusion of this final painting was of particular significance as it marked Burne-Jones’s only submission to the Royal Academy, in 1886, after being elected an Associate in 1885. On that occasion the hang at the Royal Academy was extremely discordant according to a writer from *The Times*, who declared that the painting ‘fought against its neighbours.’⁷⁶ The neighbours in question were two portraits of women, both wearing

⁷⁶ ‘Mr. Burne-Jones at the New Gallery,’ *The Times*, 31 December 1892, 12.

strong reds, *Mrs Pfeiffer* by Arthur Cope and *A Lady* by Henry Marriott Paget. In both style and subject matter, they could not have contrasted more with *Depths of the Sea*: the two portraits were of living people and each focussed on a realistic portrayal of the sitter. Burne-Jones, instead, drew his inspiration from the world of his imagination. One review questioned whether 'mythology and fairy tales [were] a proper subject for the art of an age which has ceased to believe in them?'⁷⁷ This writer continued by suggesting that poets were within their rights to draw upon these subjects, but not modern painters.

The prominence of *The Depths of the Sea* on the west wall at the Memorial Exhibition, twelve years after its first appearance at the RA, acknowledged recognition of Burne-Jones's Associate Academician status, yet at the same time also represented his independence, his attitude to the Academy, and his ultimate resignation from that institution in 1893. His ambivalent relationship with the Royal Academy was summed up in the *Daily News* where the painting was referred to as Burne-Jones's 'revenge upon the Academy for its tardy recognition of his name.'⁷⁸ Victoria Newhouse writes that in 'tracing the same objects from one exhibition to another, it becomes clear that installation can define the very nature of what is being shown.'⁷⁹ This is a particularly valid point with reference to *The Depths of the Sea*, where the painting was shown to distinct disadvantage on the walls of the Royal Academy in 1886, yet successfully formed a central part of the display at the New Gallery for the Memorial Exhibition in 1898.

Although *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* stood centrally within this collection, it was the painting on the far left, *The Wheel of Fortune*, that set the tone and theme for the wall and linked the paintings as a cohesive group. (Figure 137) The narrative within this picture provides a way of reading the wall as a whole, with a message that was particularly close to Burne-Jones's heart. Indeed, in a letter from Burne-Jones to Helen Gaskell, the artist expressed his thoughts on the theme: 'My Fortune's Wheel is a true

⁷⁷ 'The Royal Academy (Second Article),' *The Times*, 8 May 1886, 8.

⁷⁸ 'The Burne-Jones Exhibition,' *Daily News*, 31 December 1892, 2.

⁷⁹ Victoria Newhouse, *Art and the Power of Placement* (New York: Montacelli Press, 2005), 39.

image, and we take our turn at it, and are broken upon it.⁸⁰ In the painting Burne-Jones depicts a king, a poet, and a slave, all three of whom are at the mercy of the goddess of fortune, whose female figure is shown in monumental proportions that critics linked from the start to his study of Michelangelo's art.⁸¹ Burne-Jones made four journeys in total to Italy, initially with the encouragement of John Ruskin, with the third taking place in 1871 when he was accompanied by his wife, Georgiana. On this occasion he visited Rome with the supreme intention of viewing the Sistine Chapel. Georgiana later recalled his excitement in planning the visit, writing that 'he bought the best opera-glass he could find, folded his railway rug thickly, and, lying down on his back, read the ceiling from beginning to end, peering into every corner and revelling in its execution.'⁸²

The nude figures of the king and slave also bear a strong resemblance to Michelangelo's sculptures, now in the Louvre, of the *Rebellious Slave* and *Dying Slave*. (Figure 138) The twisting body of the *Rebellious Slave*, in particular, is visible in the king's contorted torso and head, possibly reflecting both a physical and mental struggle. A writer for the *Daily News* suggested that the nude male figures also owed something to Luca Signorelli (1450-1523) who painted a number of frescoes in the San Brizio Chapel at Orvieto Cathedral between 1499 and 1503, and which Burne-Jones is also recorded as having visited.⁸³ (Figure 139) There are numerous twisted male nude figures dominating the composition in the scenes of Signorelli's *The Apocalypse and Last Judgment*. Furthermore, there was a revived interest in Signorelli's art during the late nineteenth century, with an exhibition of his work held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1893 which Burne-Jones might have attended.

Burne-Jones's studies and drawings show the development of *The Wheel of Fortune* over a period of ten years. There are four other versions in various media, including a

⁸⁰ Letter from Burne-Jones to Helen Gaskell, March 1893, quoted in Penelope Fitzgerald, *Edward Burne-Jones: A Life* (London: Michael Joseph), 245.

⁸¹ See for example 'The Grosvenor Gallery,' *Daily News*, 28 April 1883, 5; 'Fine Arts,' *Graphic*, 5 May, 1883, 15. *Edward Burne-Jones*, Exhibition catalogue (Tate, 2018), 132.

⁸² G. Burne-Jones, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, 26.

⁸³ G. Burne-Jones, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, 25.

small oil at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne (c. 1875) and a watercolour version of a similar date at the Hammersmith and Fulham Libraries. There are also numerous pencil and chalk studies including three studies of Fortuna's head sold by Sotheby's in May 2015 from the estate of Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe. (Figure 140) Two of these drawings show Burne-Jones experimenting with elaborately plaited hair, which he eventually covered in a headdress. In the final version Burne-Jones depicted the three nude male figures of the poet, king and slave placed vertically within the picture frame, resembling a human ladder. The single figure of the powerful goddess, daughter of Jupiter, equals the total height of the three mortal bodies. She is fully clothed in metallic hues and turns the wheel of fortune with her left hand. Like the goddess, the wheel spans the whole painting as it both crushes and raises the mortals in a continuous, relentless rise and fall. The message seems very clear: that no man escapes the capricious nature of fate.

The theme of fate, so starkly illustrated in this painting, is also evident in the extended group of images on this wall. The two paintings from the *St George* series present the princess as a victim of fate, being led to her destiny in the one painting, and tied to the tree, a limp and defeated sacrifice, in the other, on both occasions wearing the white of innocence. (Figures 141 and 142) The story of St. George is a classic tale of chivalry, with a helpless young girl being sacrificed to an evil dragon, but rescued just in time by the male hero, and was a story that was also reframed by Burne-Jones in the Perseus series. Had the complete cycle of the St. George paintings been placed together, as well as in the correct order, the chivalry and heroism of George himself might have been the strongest theme to emerge from viewing the paintings. However, within the context of this wall, the focus instead lay on the vulnerability of Princess Sabra, unable to escape her fate despite her social standing. The precise juxtaposition of artworks on this wall resulted in the story of the Princess Sabra canvasses becoming part of a new narrative.

Continuing the theme of fate and fortune, the Venus paintings illustrate the close relationship between fate and love. In *Laus Veneris*, it is Venus who is depicted as a victim of love; languid, unhappy, awaiting the return of Tannhäuser, she is seemingly unable to rouse herself from her state of melancholy. (Figure 143) *The Mirror of Venus*,

like *Laus Veneris*, is open to a number of interpretations. (Figure 144) However, the song from William Morris's *The Hill of Venus* describes the desolate, colourless life for men and women of the land before the arrival of Venus which transformed their lives through the power of love. Lines 299 to 300 suggest the image of the young girls in the painting gazing at their reflections in the pool of water:

Or in the stream the maids would stare,
Nor know why they were made so fair;⁸⁴

According to the legend the maids (and men of the realm) were victims of ignorance – ignorance of love, which in turn had the power to transform their lives from a dull, joyless existence where they awaited death, to one of mirth, vigour and engagement with their own physical beauty as well as that around them. Through the arrival of Venus their fortunes changed and a new destiny awaited them, reflecting the rotating wheel of fortune as they were rescued from being crushed and instead raised to new heights.

The Mirror of Venus had first been viewed by the public in 1877 on the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery, while in the following year *Laus Veneris* was shown at the Grosvenor's summer exhibition. The public had a further chance to view these two paintings, this time together, at the Burne-Jones retrospective of 1892 to 1893 at the New Gallery, where (to the viewer) *The Mirror of Venus* was placed on the left of *Laus Veneris*. However, at the Memorial Exhibition the order was reversed, with *Laus Veneris* on the left of *King Cophetua*, while *The Mirror of Venus* was placed immediately to the right.

In the earlier presentation of these paintings, with *The Mirror of Venus* first, followed by *Laus Veneris*, there is a strong compulsion to create a narrative link between the two. If *The Mirror of Venus* is interpreted as representing Venus's arrival on earth, and the subsequent transformation of the world and the lives of those within through their

⁸⁴ William Morris, 'The Hill of Venus,' *The Earthly Paradise* (Bristol: Read & Co., 2021 [1870]).

exposure to love, then it must form the first part of the story. The only figure shown standing could represent Venus herself. She is distinct through her pose, standing where the rest of the maidens are kneeling or bending around the pool. She appears serene and wears the simplest dress out of the entire group, although bare flesh is in abundance, doubled because of the reflections in the water. This is an exterior scene set against a rocky landscape which gives the painting depth and which evokes the landscapes of early Italian masters.

By contrast, in *Laus Veneris* love is already present, with Venus herself suffering from the loss of her lover. Logically, it could be interpreted as a sequel to the *Mirror of Venus*. The scene is set in a claustrophobic interior, with the figures of Venus and her handmaids pushed right up against the front of the picture plane, reminiscent of the king and the maid in *King Cophetua*. Their clothes are thick and heavy, emphasizing the close, draining atmosphere. Venus dominates the image not only through her comparative size but also through the sheer weight of her emotions. She is separated from the other figures, reclining where they are upright, with her crown and the music stand also acting as barriers between her and the other women. Presented after *The Mirror of Venus*, as it was in 1892, *Laus Veneris* could be interpreted as a later episode within a specific narrative.

The hang at the Memorial Exhibition, six years later, was in reverse order, making it difficult to establish an obvious narrative link between the two paintings. However, they can also be explained within the thematic framework of fate as dictated by the *Wheel of Fortune*. As part of that particular theme, *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* can also be re-interpreted as an image showing the cruel nature of fate. Although the two protagonists (king and maid) are different in almost every way, they are both subject to fate in the same way as all mortals, and some gods. The king is victim to his overpowering love for the beggar girl and here is shown ready to renounce his worldly possessions in the maid's favour. Having been selected by the king, the young maid has no choice but to accept, so she too is unable to escape her fate, although luckily for these two the ballad reveals that they were well-matched and lived a long and happy life together.

The final painting in the group of seven, *Depths of the Sea*, can also be re-framed through the theme of fate, visually expressed so powerfully in *Wheel of Fortune*. The drowned sailor possibly fell victim to the mermaid's beauty or magic before being lured to his death. The placement of his arms and hands, behind his back as though tied together, recalls the imagery of martyrs, particularly depictions of St. Sebastian. As part of the presentation on this wall, the painting can be understood within the framework of the same theme of fate, and man's inability to fight it in any way.

The Rembrandt Exhibition

Visitors to the Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition would have brought with them their own narratives, backgrounds, and knowledge. This may have included comparisons with other cultural events taking place at the time. It is worth noting that the alternative major exhibition of that winter season was also a one-man show, the Rembrandt retrospective at the Royal Academy, and it is likely many visitors attended both events. How might this have affected their interpretation of the work of Burne-Jones and the way that the New Gallery spaces were used to present his life's achievements? The Rembrandt exhibition had originated at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the first ever exhibition devoted to a single Old Master, and came near the end of what Catherine Scallon refers to as the 'Rembrandt Decade.'⁸⁵ In 1897 eight fully illustrated volumes of the catalogue raisonné were published by Wilhelm von Bode and Cornelius Hofstede de Groot, the culmination of many years work and which signified a resurgence of interest in the artist.

While most critics kept their reviews of these two shows in separate issues of their journals or newspapers, Harry Spielmann produced an article on each one on the same day in the *Graphic* within the section 'Art Exhibitions.' He began with an appraisal of 'Rembrandt at the Royal Academy,' and followed this with a review of 'Edward Burne-

⁸⁵ Catherine Scallon, *Rembrandt: Reputation and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 127-80.

Jones at the New Gallery.⁸⁶ Spielman succeeded in praising each artist on his own merit but carefully avoided drawing direct comparisons. He applauded Rembrandt's 'highest technical accomplishment,' and emphasised the 'noble realism of the sitters' in Rembrandt's many portraits.⁸⁷ His article on the Burne-Jones exhibition focussed on the artist's ability to be 'lyrical in his magic world of painted romance.' Spielman compared Burne-Jones's art to the poetry of Edmund Spenser, insisting that his 'genius from first to last was that of the poet.'⁸⁸ The repeated references to the poetry within the art of Burne-Jones are ironic when considering *The Times* review of *The Depths of the Sea*, mentioned earlier, where the critic clearly felt that painting and poetry were two completely separate spheres.

In contrast to the tone in Spielmann's articles, R.A.M. Stevenson made his views perfectly clear in the *Art Journal* by stating that the two artists 'were most unequally matched as painters.'⁸⁹ Stevenson applauded Rembrandt as 'one of the most powerful naturalists' whose 'knowledge of form... [and] passionate admiration for light' placed him as a leading artist, not only of seventeenth-century Holland, but of all times.⁹⁰ Like Spielman, Stevenson drew attention to Rembrandt's particular ability as a portrait painter, suggesting that 'he stands alone' in this field.⁹¹ Where Spielman argued for the poetry that he felt was evident within Burne-Jones's oeuvre, Stevenson, by contrast, asserted that viewing Rembrandt's art was 'like reading poetry.'⁹²

Stevenson was damning in his assessment of Burne-Jones's abilities commenting that his 'bright colour [was] often discordant' and that the artist's persistence 'in his devotion to a certain type of human being' meant that he was unable to convey emotion and character effectively, and that this lay 'outside the scope of his artistic powers.'⁹³ Spielman, conversely, promoted the view that Burne-Jones painted a variety

⁸⁶ M.H. Spielmann, 'Art Exhibitions,' *Graphic*, 7 January 1899, 18.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ R.A.M. Stevenson, 'Rembrandt and Burne-Jones,' *Art Journal* Vol. 61 (February 1899): 57-58.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

of type, arguing that the artist 'did not, as some pretend, always play upon the same string.'⁹⁴ Comyns Carr addressed this repeated criticism in his essay, explaining that 'The scheme in which he chose to work did not admit of wide variety of characterisation' but that his aim was to use form and colour as 'symbols ... for the expression of an idea.'⁹⁵ Stevenson clearly did admire certain of Burne-Jones's paintings, suggesting that those with the simplest colour scheme and design were the most successful, but his overall view was that the nineteenth-century artist's abilities were limited and therefore 'It is little wonder...that in some respects he failed.'⁹⁶

One article which did present more of a direct comparison of the two exhibitions was given in a review of an illustrated lecture presented in February 1899 by David Croal Thomson (1855-1930). The lecture was delivered to the Highgate Literary Association in the Presbyterian Hall, Highgate, where Croal Thomson was a regular speaker. He was an Edinburgh-born dealer and critic who spent much of his life based in London. As well as being a director of the Goupil Gallery, he was founder of the art firm Barbizon House and editor of the *Art Journal* from 1892 to 1902. The straightforward lecture title gave a clear picture of the content: 'Rembrandt and Burne-Jones – a contrast and comparison.'⁹⁷ According to the article, Croal Thomson opened his lecture proclaiming Rembrandt to be 'the greatest painter amongst the Old Masters, in what may be termed the neo-classical school,' while Burne-Jones was posited as 'one of the greatest exponents of classical themes.'⁹⁸ The speaker drew a series of contrasts between the two artists, praising Rembrandt for being 'dignified, sincere, masterly,' while Burne-Jones was presented as 'imbued with classical feeling.'⁹⁹

However, he struggled to find similarities in terms of style, subject-matter or technique, and suggested instead that the common ground was in 'their devotion to work, and in

⁹⁴ Spielman, 'Art Exhibitions,' 18.

⁹⁵ Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Burne-Jones: Intellectual, Designer, People's Man,' in *Edward Burne-Jones* edited Alison Smith (Tate, 2018), 21.

⁹⁶ Stevenson, 'Rembrandt and Burne-Jones,' 57-58.

⁹⁷ 'Rembrandt and Burne-Jones: Lecture by Mr. Croal Thomson,' *Daily News*, 21 February 1899, 6.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

their achievements.¹⁰⁰ Croal Thomson further suggested that, while Rembrandt was at this point considered 'by far the greater master of the two,' in time Burne-Jones's work would be increasingly admired and that he would be regarded 'with the veneration we willingly accord to the Italian masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.'¹⁰¹ Spielman and Croal Thomson were in agreement that both Rembrandt and Burne-Jones were masters within their own fields, and that the two artists were equally pioneering in the way that they created visionary worlds on canvas.

The Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition transformed the remodelled New Gallery spaces for just over three months in the winter of 1898 to 1899. On entering the gallery, the visitor was transported into Burne-Jones's world of the imagination, with themes of love, beauty, fate and mysticism evident in the oils, tapestries, watercolours and studies. Although temporary exhibitions are provisional by nature, a memorial of any sort is created to give a lasting impression and sense of permanence. This exhibition represented the final opportunity for the public to view Burne-Jones's work as a large collection and was designed to represent the artist's entire career, leaving a permanent memory in the minds of those who visited. Presentation and display, therefore, were of particular significance. The way that the prize spots were used, the order of the hang, and the juxtapositions of particular artworks, created a narrative that formed an underlying layer of meaning within the Gallery spaces.

A few months before the Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition, the first exhibition of a newly-formed society had taken place at the Prince's Skating Rink in Knightsbridge. The society was the broadly-named International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, whose first President was the American artist James McNeill Whistler. In 1898, other exhibitors to the show included Aubrey Beardsley, Edgar Degas, Édouard Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Frederick Sandys and John Lavery. Philip Athill's essay on the early years of the Society reveals that the exhibition was not particularly successful and that 'in spite of good press the public was not numerous,' with the final financial reckoning a deficit of nine hundred pounds. The second exhibition, one year later and in the same

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

location, also failed to draw the crowds or help establish the Society within the London art scene.

However, six years later, the Society moved permanently to the New Gallery with the newly-appointed Auguste Rodin as President, replacing Whistler after the latter's death in 1904. With the arrival of the International Society, the New Gallery was propelled into the twentieth century and with this came a full engagement with international art from all corners of the globe.¹⁰² At the same time, the Society found a location and venue which worked particularly well for its wide-ranging art forms, including monumental sculptures, small prints and designs, large oil canvasses and the intricate work of engravers. The final chapter opens with a critical investigation of the International exhibition of 1904 and assesses how and why the New Gallery proved, once more, to be the ideal venue for exhibiting art at the turn of the century.

¹⁰² The International Society's concept of *internationalism* was largely euro-centric, with additional contributions from Canada, Australia and the USA. During their time at the New Gallery, art from Asia was represented only twice: the collection of Japanese art owned by Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon in 1909, and a painting by the Persian artist Omar Meherab at the Fair Women exhibition of 1909.

Chapter Five: The International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers at the New Gallery, 1904 - 1909

In January 1904 the New Gallery staged the first-ever public display of François-Auguste René Rodin's (1840-1917) monumental sculpture, *Le Grand Penseur*. Cast in white plaster, the seated figure rested on a plinth which effectively doubled its height, causing it to soar through the open space of the Central Hall to reach the gilded railings of the Balcony above. A photograph of Rodin, surrounded by members of the Council of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, reveals the dramatic impact of the work on the space. (Figure 145) The immediate response in the press was to focus on three aspects of the work: the size, the material and the sculpture's expressive qualities. The art critic Julia Cartwright described the figure rising 'like a great brooding giant out of the sea of heads,' while other reviews highlighted 'the terrible white grandeur of "Le Penseur,"' as well as its 'vast power of emotion that is majestic and thrilling.'¹

The display formed the centrepiece of the Fourth Exhibition of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, the first of nine exhibitions organised by the Society at the New Gallery.² Established in 1898 as a radical, progressive association by artists for artists, the purpose of the International was to showcase the best of art from Europe, North America and the wider world.³ With the American-born, British-based artist, James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) as first President, the International promoted an anti-Royal Academy stand from the outset, with Whistler insisting that no Academicians were eligible for membership. After two exhibitions held at the Prince's Skating Rink, Knightsbridge, in 1898 and 1899, and one at the Institute for Painters,

¹ Angela Emanuel, ed., *A Bright Remembrance: The Diaries of Julia Cartwright* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1988), 273; 'The International Society's Exhibition: The Secessionists' Triumph,' *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 13 January 1904, 8; 'Art Notes,' *The Academy and Literature, 1902-1905*, 23 January 1904, 106.

² Annual Exhibitions took place in 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909. In addition, the International organised an Exhibition of Fair Women in 1908 and 1909, and a Memorial Exhibition for J.M. Whistler in 1905.

³ For an overview of the early years of the International see the article by Philip Athill: 'The International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers,' *Burlington Magazine* Vol. 127, no. 982 (Jan. 1985): 21-33.

Piccadilly, in 1901, the International was searching for a new venue which would reinvigorate the Society and provide an impressive, flexible space within the 'hub of our aesthetic universe.'⁴ The choice of the New Gallery fulfilled the requirements of location, size and scale, while also supporting a 'protest against [the] triviality and narrowness' of the Royal Academy through the Gallery's support of industrial art, photography and a wide range of contemporary works of all media.⁵

This chapter represents the final discussion of the metaphor of the palimpsest as a way of analysing temporary installations within an exhibition venue. The visual traces of the exhibition and the Society's collaboration with the New Gallery are extremely limited. Michael Shanks's insistence on 'digging deep' and employing 'detective work [to look] to the significant detail' of tiny fragments of the past are especially relevant to the research and analysis of findings in this chapter.⁶ This section begins with an examination of the aforementioned photograph to assess the transformative power of sculpture by questioning how *Le Grand Penseur* activated the space of the Central Hall to create a range of meanings for the viewer. A close examination of visual and written evidence from the exhibition will reveal Rodin's interest in antique and Renaissance sculpture, yet also demonstrate his search for a modern form of expression. His work is presented as a crucial link between traditional and modern sculpture and is set within the context of the emerging fields of psychology and psycho-analysis, with particular reference to Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) publication of the *Interpretation of Dreams*.⁷

A second photograph of Rodin, taken in the West Room, provides evidence of the revolutionary way in which the Society sought to frame its interpretation of internationalism by cutting across national boundaries through policies of display. (Figure 146) The West Room was also notable for showing a strong presence of British art, particularly from select younger artists whose work was inspired by the Old Masters. This group, which included William Strang (1859-1921), Charles de Soussy

⁴ 'The Future of the International Society,' *Burlington Magazine* Vol. 4, no. 11 (Feb. 1904): 105-108.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks, *Theatre/Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2001), 10.

⁷ Originally published in 1899, an abridged version, *On Dreams*, was published in 1901.

Ricketts (1866-1931) and Charles Haslewood Shannon (1863-1937), received considerable attention during the first two decades of the twentieth century but then fell out of favour. However, recent scholarship by Barbara Pezzini and Samuel Shaw has identified these artists as crucial to the development of British art at this period.⁸ This chapter provides an opportunity to re-examine the group within the context of the New Gallery, a highly significant venue where they could showcase their work on a regular basis.

Le Grand Penseur in the Central Hall

In 1904, Rodin's sculpture, as surmised from the photograph, stood just off centre in the Central Hall, opposite the entrance from Regent Street and between the fountain and the steps to the North Room. The Society modified the decor of the Hall by adding soft, thin white drapes with gentle swags on the west wall. The question of the decoration of the gallery was central to discussion at a meeting of the Council on 16 July 1903, after which a sub-committee comprising Francis Howard, H. Wilson, Edward Walton, Joseph Pennell and John Lavery was established to decide upon the design of each exhibition space.⁹ The initial plan appears to have been to create a scheme which was 'light in tone,' although the end result was to place green muslin on the walls of the West Room and a neutral colour over the existing red of the South and North Rooms, with the above-mentioned white drapes in the Hall.¹⁰

One member of this sub-committee, Edward Walton, would undoubtedly have viewed his brother George's remodelled interiors at the Eastman Kodak exhibition of 1897, which had been the first instance of refashioned wall coverings at the New Gallery.¹¹ This was followed, in 1903, with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society covering the

⁸ Barbara Pezzini, '(Inter)national Art: The London Old Masters Market and Modern British Painting, 1900-1914,' in *Art Crossing Borders*, edited by Jane Dirk Baetens and Dries Lyna (Leiden: Brill, 2019). Pezzini and Samuel Shaw, 'Exhibitions and the Market for Modern British Art: *Independent Art of Today* at Agnew's Gallery, 1906,' *Art History* Vol. 43, Issue 4 (Sept. 2020): 710-740.

⁹ International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers, 1897-1937, TGA 738/2, Tate Archive. Joseph Pennell raised this point for discussion.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ See Chapter Three.

walls of the West Room with white fabric to create an alternative, fresh look to the display.¹² Since the Minute books of the International indicate that a number of their meetings were held at 121 Regent Street, it is likely that the majority of Council members would have seen and noted these changes. With no known photographs of later International shows at the gallery it is not possible to conclude whether further changes to display were made.

In the photograph Rodin sits with nine of fifteen members of his Executive Council, including the Vice President John Lavery (1856-1941) on his immediate right. In the back row the central figure can be identified as Fritz Thaulow, with Joseph Pennell on his left and Edward Walton at the end of the row. The positioning of the Council members may have been partly arbitrary, but Lavery's placement next to Rodin is noteworthy. He was one of the founding members of the International Society and held the position of Vice President from its inception, resigning at the end of 1907 after ten years of involvement. Letters from members of the Society indicate that a large number of artists attempted to convince him to overturn his resignation, but without success.¹³ He was an integral part of the organisation, carrying the weight of arranging exhibitions and decision making during the Presidencies of both Whistler and Rodin, neither of whom were particularly easy to deal with. Lavery claimed that Whistler was 'an absentee President' who nonetheless demanded details of all meetings to be reported to him at length.¹⁴ Of Rodin he commented that 'he only came to London on three occasions during his Presidency, and then he spent all his time in the British Museum.'¹⁵

Rodin arrived in London early in 1904 in time for the Private View and to oversee the safe arrival of *Le Grand Penseur*. In contrast to previous exhibitions at the gallery, such as the Summer Exhibition where the Hall was filled with similarly-sized sculpture, in 1904 Rodin's monumental cast dominated the space, its prominence dictating both

¹² See Chapter Two.

¹³ International Society Minute Books, TGA 738, Tate Archive.

¹⁴ Lavery, *The Life of a Painter* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1940), 107.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

mood and meaning. The sheer volume and height of the work ensured its authority within the room and served to connect the Hall with the Balcony above. At earlier exhibitions these two spaces had operated as separate spheres of display, and although visitors would have been aware of the Balcony from below, the pictures on its walls were largely hidden from view. The strategic placement of *Le Grand Penseur* drew the eye up to the Balcony and the skylights above, uniting the two exhibition spaces in a new way. Although the Balcony railings had been previously used to hang tapestries, these works had not distorted the space in the same manner.¹⁶ The tapestries were hung flush to the railings and were two-dimensional. By contrast, Rodin's three-dimensional figure defied gravity to push upwards into the space above.

The configuration of the Central Hall to house Rodin's colossal work recalls the Quadrangle of the Royal Academy which was first utilised to display monumental sculpture in 1896 with Harry Bates's massive equestrian statue of *Lord Roberts*. Although at thirty feet high the statue exceeded the overall height of *Le Grand Penseur*, it should be noted that the plinth alone was approximately twenty feet in height. The forecourt was re-used in this way in the summer of 1902 for a display of Thomas Brock's *The Black Prince*, and in 1904 with George Frederick Watts's *Physical Energy*, his final submission to a Summer Exhibition before his death on 1 July that year.¹⁷ (Figure 147) As is reported in the International Society Minute Books of October 1903, *Physical Energy* was originally destined for the Central Hall of the New Gallery in January 1904 (as part of the International exhibition), a decision taken before Rodin had accepted the Presidency.¹⁸ It is not clear whether it was Watts's decision to withhold his sculpture, or that of the International Society, perhaps because the new President's *Le Grand Penseur* took priority.

The Central Hall, like the Royal Academy Quadrangle, formed a space with (almost) unrestricted height, was surrounded on all four sides and had daylight streaming in

¹⁶ See Figures 13 and 108.

¹⁷ Liz Prettejohn, '1902: Royalty for a New Century,' in Mark Hallett, Sarah Victoria Turner and Jessica Parker, eds., *Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition: A Chronicle, 1769-2018*, (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2018), accessed 17 September 2023, <https://chronicle250.com/1902>.

¹⁸ Minutes of Council Meeting Book II, 5 October 1903, International Society Archives, Tate.

from above. By referencing the outdoor space of the Royal Academy, the arrangement of the Central Hall in 1904 also recalled the previous layer at 121 Regent Street when in use as the outdoor forecourt of Newman's bustling livery yard. Mike Pearson argues that 'layers of the site are revealed through reference to ... site usage,' and here the earlier layer and prior function of the area (in Newman's Yard) are revealed through the allusion to the Royal Academy Quadrangle, an outdoor, enclosed space. In this way, the previous layer of the site remained cognitively active.¹⁹

The Hall constituted the first place entered by the visitor, and the last exhibition space viewed on leaving the New Gallery. When visitors arrived in the Hall for the International Society exhibition, only the plinth of *Le Grand Penseur* was at eye level; to glimpse the body of the work, the visitor needed to stand back and look sharply upwards. It should be remembered that after entering each room the visitor retraced their steps into the Hall before entering the next exhibition space, which meant that the sculpture was viewed from all possible angles before ascending the staircase. From the Balcony it was possible to view the top of the head, the straining muscles of the back and the bowed frame of the majestic figure. The Balcony extended around three sides of the Hall thus providing multiple viewpoints from above, giving an exceptional opportunity for visitors to appreciate the modelling of the figure and the skill of Rodin's craftsmanship.²⁰ However, the viewpoints granted more than a visual awareness of the sculpture. Visitors were offered alternative modes of apprehension or meaning as they absorbed the way the surfaces and contours reflected the piece's emotional content.

Le Grand Penseur: Visitor Response

In assessing visitor response to the sculpture on this occasion, it is useful to identify what the public already knew of Rodin's oeuvre and whether this work would have been familiar to those visiting the gallery. In 1880, Rodin received the commission to create a monumental portal covered with sculptural relief for a planned Musée des

¹⁹ Mike Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 8.

²⁰ At the recent exhibition *The Making of Rodin* (Tate Modern 18 May-21 November 2021) the muscles of *Le Grand Penseur* were highly visible, but there was no chance to see the sculpture except from below. The presentation at the New Gallery was unique.

Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Known as the *Gates of Hell*, the figure of *Le Grand Penseur* was a colossal version of a sculpture which originated as the crowning element on the portal. (Figure 148) The figure was originally referred to as *The Poet* and, according to the Musée Rodin, represented Dante Alighieri (c. 1265-1321) author of the *Divine Comedy*, the text on which Rodin based his *Gates of Hell*.²¹ Other scholars link the figure to Minos, the judge of the damned as described by Dante, or possibly a combination of Dante, Victor Hugo and Charles Baudelaire.²² The fluidity of interpretation was evident from the time of Rodin's initial work on the *Gates* and continues to the present day.

From an early stage, Rodin began to remove figures from his *Gates* and convert them into independent works of art, sometimes changing the scale or the viewpoint of a composition. Versions of *The Kiss* and *Ugolino*, for example, were exhibited in 1887, first in Paris and then in Brussels. The first known independent version of *Le Penseur* was commissioned in 1881 by Constantine Ionides, introduced to Rodin by Alphonse Legros, and cast in bronze. Ionides planned initially to place the sculpture 'on a round table in the living room where it can be seen from every side.'²³ However, it was ultimately installed above the picture rail in a room dedicated to his art collection which echoed its position on the tympanum of the *Gates of Hell* doors. (Figure 149) In 1888, a plaster version of this cast was exhibited at a major exhibition of French art held in Copenhagen, which was organised by Carl Jacobsen. At this point the figure was still publicly referred to as *The Poet*.²⁴

According to Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, the word *penseur* was not used until 1889 when Rodin exhibited the aforementioned plaster at the Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, in an exhibition with Claude Monet.²⁵ However, Albert Elsen contradicts this,

²¹ Musée Rodin website, accessed 17 September 2023, <http://www.musee-rodin.fr/en>.

²² Celeste Farge, Bénédicte Garnier and Ian Jenkins, *Rodin and the art of Ancient Greece* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2018), 122; Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, 'The Gates of Hell: The Crucible,' in *Rodin* (London: Royal Academy, 2006), 63.

²³ Andrew Watson, 'Constantine Alexander Ionides: Rodin's first important English patron,' *Sculpture Journal* Vol. 16, no. 2 (2007): 31.

²⁴ Le Normand-Romain, 'The Gates of Hell,' 63.

²⁵ Le Normand-Romain, catalogue entry for *The Thinker*, in *Rodin*, 225.

arguing that Ionides used the term *penseur* in a letter to Rodin dated to 1884 in which Ionides refers to the delivery of a large crate, asking Rodin ‘Would it be your “penseur?”’²⁶ Elsen surmises that it was Rodin’s choice of word rather than that of Ionides. Regardless, by 1904 the term *penseur* was unquestionably well established in connection to the figure. Indeed, the pose had long been associated with individuals lost in thought and contemplation, such as the central figure in Albrecht Dürer’s *Melencolia*. (Figure 150)

It was Ernest William Beckett, second Baron Grimthorpe, who encouraged Rodin to make a larger version of the figure, suggesting that the process of enlargement might increase the evocative power of the work.²⁷ Beckett had commissioned a bust of his fiancé, Eve Fairfax, from Rodin in the early 1900s, as a result of which Eve and Rodin struck up a close friendship and corresponded regularly, while she also modelled for him.²⁸ In a letter from Rodin to Eve, in which he refers to the monumental version of *Le Penseur*, Rodin writes that ‘the effect is better than when it is small. That should satisfy him [Beckett] because it was on his advice that the size has been increased.’²⁹ Visitors to the New Gallery were able to judge the effect of the two sizes for themselves as both the original size in bronze and the new colossal version in plaster were on display in the Central Hall. Rudolf Dircks, critic for the *Art Journal*, commented that ‘the conception gains in its monumental form,’ and it was the enlarged version that drew most response.³⁰

Although it is unlikely that many visitors would have previously seen a version of *Le Penseur*, other examples of Rodin’s work were available to view in England, with the first of his sculptures entering a public collection in 1902 when *St. John the Baptist* was bought for the Victoria and Albert Museum. Rodin had, in fact, exhibited in London as

²⁶ Albert Elsen, *Rodin’s Thinker and the Dilemmas of Modern Public Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 55.

²⁷ Le Norman-Romain, catalogue entry for *The Thinker*, in *Rodin*, 225.

²⁸ A marble version of the bust was displayed at the Whitechapel Gallery exhibition, *Twenty Years of British Art*.

²⁹ Letter of 26 July 1904, archives of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, quoted in *Rodin* exhibition catalogue, 225.

³⁰ Rudolf Dircks, ‘The “International” at the New Gallery: Works by Rodin at the Fourth Exhibition,’ *Art Journal* (Feb. 1904): 39.

early as 1881 for a period of three years, at the Grosvenor Gallery, the Dudley and the Royal Academy, and after a considerable break from the London art world resumed exhibiting in 1898, this time with the International Society and the Carfax Gallery.³¹ Regular patrons of the New Gallery also had the opportunity to view Rodin's work in November 1903 at an exhibition of the Society of Portrait Painters, when busts of *Victor Hugo* and *William Henley* were on display in the Central Hall. His increased participation in exhibitions at the turn of the century coincided with the publication of a number of monographs on the artist and regular articles in the *Art Journal* and *Magazine of Art*.³²

As a result, the public had a variety of occasions to view Rodin's work in London and also to engage with a multiplicity of biography and criticism which expounded his methods and the influences on his practice. The interpretation of *Le Grand Penseur* by visitors to the New Gallery was partially mediated through a combination of these prior encounters and the scholarship on the artist's methods and sources, particularly Rodin's interest in classical sculpture and the work of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564). There were, in addition, more recent artists whose work was linked to the figure of *Le Grand Penseur*, William Blake (1757-1827) and Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827-1875) being the most significant. A cast of Carpeaux's *Ugolino and his Sons* had been displayed in the Tuileries Gardens from 1863 and was therefore familiar to Rodin. (Figure 151) The grouping, also inspired by Dante's *Divine Comedy*, reveals the moment when Ugolino contemplates eating his sons in order to survive his own death through starvation. His muscular, naked body is seated, with his head resting on both hands. Viewers acquainted with this figure may have associated Carpeaux's treatment of Ugolino's process of thought, which involved not only his brain but also the straining muscles of his body, with Rodin's *Penseur*. However, where Ugolino looks out towards the viewer, Rodin's figure is inward-looking.

³¹ The Carfax Gallery was established in 1899 by William Rothenstein. For a history and overview see Samuel Shaw, 'The Carfax Gallery and the Camden Town Group,' *Tate Publications*, May 2012, accessed 16 June 2023, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/camden-town-group/samuel-shaw-the-carfax-gallery-and-the-camden-town-group-r1104371>.

³² For example, Leon Maillard, *Auguste Rodin, Statuaire*, (Paris: Floury, 1899); Judith Cladel, *Auguste Rodin: Pris sur la vie*, (Paris: La Plume, 1903); Rainer Maria Rilke, *Auguste Rodin* (1903).

A similarly stooped, anguished figure can be found in an etching by William Blake. His epic poem, *Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion*, was created over a period of sixteen years from 1804 to 1820 and includes one hundred etched and illustrated plates. Plate seventy-eight depicts a hunched, bird-like figure on a cliff sloping towards the sea. (Figure 152) The body is muscular and bowed, the weight of the bird head heavy on the figure's hand, with the hand folded back on itself, as is the hand of *Le Grand Penseur*. There had been a revival of interest in Blake's work from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, with Alexander Gilchrist's biography of the artist published in 1863 and an exhibition of his works held at the Burlington Fine Arts club in 1876.

Michelangelo provided a common source for Blake, Carpeaux and Rodin. His sculpture and drawings could be seen in the collections of the Royal Academy and the Victoria and Albert Museum, as well as through the circulation of prints, particularly of the Sistine Chapel. Rodin had first travelled to Italy in 1875 where he studied the work of Michelangelo, creating numerous sketches of figures from sculpture and painting that he had seen in Florence and Rome. He was drawn to the sculptor's naturalistic approach to the nude, the twisted body shapes and emphasis on musculature. Scholars have linked *Le Penseur* with both the marble figure of Lorenzo, *Il Penseroso*, on the Medici tomb, as well as the painted figure of the Prophet Jeremiah on the Sistine Chapel; these figures, in turn, drew on the *Belvedere Torso*, a fragmentary marble statue of a seated male nude.³³ (Figures 153 and 154)

The *Torso* was one of the only pieces of classical art that had avoided restoration and therefore remained in its partial state.³⁴ (Figure 155) Rodin would have initially known the work through prints and casts, but after first hand contact with the work of Michelangelo he gained a fresh perspective on the piece and on other works from

³³ See for example: Cathine Lampert, 'Introduction, Rodin's Nature,' in *Rodin* (London: Royal Academy, 2006); Rainer Maria Rilke, *Auguste Rodin*, trans. Lessie Lemont and Hans Trausil (London: Pallas Athene, 2006); Albert Elsen, *Rodin's Thinker* (Yale University Press, 1985).

³⁴ Now in the Museo Pio-Clementino of the Vatican Museums.

antiquity, including the Parthenon sculptures which he first viewed in London in 1881. These architectural sculptures from the exterior of the Parthenon in Athens were devised by Pheidias (c480-430 BC) and carried out by his workshop. Thomas Bruce, Seventh Earl of Elgin excavated and removed portions of the carvings between 1800 and 1803 and sold them to the British Museum in 1816. As a result, they were also well known to the viewing public who might have recognised Rodin's references to the classical figures and fragments. Rodin claimed that 'the Antique is beauty in its supreme form,' and this contact with classical art not only enriched and developed his own oeuvre, but also encouraged him to become an avid collector.³⁵

Rodin was fascinated with the form and naturalism of ancient sculptures. However, beyond this fascination, Rodin also appreciated that the Parthenon sculptures were converted to individual objects of art by their removal from Greece and their fragmentation from age and wear. He recognised a similar process in his work on the *Gates of Hell* where, as mentioned earlier, many of the figures became liberated from the gates and were reinvented with new meanings. The allure of fragments and the notion of 'becoming,' the idea that a work was permanently in a transformative state, were concepts which intrigued Rodin. His particular interest in using plaster as a primary material for modelling was associated with this curiosity about fragments and evolving states. Plaster suggested the impression that the artwork was not fully formed and therefore had the potential to become something unexpected.

All Rodin's previous exhibits in London had been bronzes.³⁶ It was the New Gallery which provided the first opportunity for the viewing public to see what he could achieve in plaster, particularly on a colossal scale. The specific properties of plaster, especially in such a large mass, were noted by critics and refocused discussion on the artistic qualities of the figure. Elsen argues that, until this point, 'critics had discussed the conception, identity, and purpose of *The Thinker*,' but the enlarged plaster version

³⁵ Claudine Mitchell, *Rodin: The Zola of Sculpture* (London: Routledge, 2004), 138.

³⁶ See Alain Beausire, *Quand Rodin Exposait* (Musée Rodin, 1988) for a complete list of all exhibits during his lifetime. The bronzes exhibited to this point were *Man with the Broken Nose*, Grosvenor Gallery 1882, *Bust of St. John the Baptist*, Royal Academy 1882, and *Bust of Carriere-Belleuse*, Dudley Gallery, 1883.

drew attention to the 'vigour of modelling.'³⁷ Although white plaster was often regarded as an inferior material associated with preliminary work or replicas, it was relatively common in the nineteenth century for sculptors to exhibit new work as a white plaster cast. If the work attracted a buyer it might then be copied in marble or cast in bronze. For Rodin, the use of plaster also provided a link to the past through the widespread misunderstanding that classical sculpture was white.³⁸ Although Rodin was conscious that this was not the case, the colour of plaster remained suggestive of works of the antiquity.

Furthermore, using plaster enabled Rodin to model his work in such a way as to try and capture the essence of life that he felt had not been seen since classical antiquity. He strove to look beyond the surface in order to 'reproduce the spirit... the entire truth.'³⁹ This was especially apparent in *Le Grand Penseur*. Rodin disclosed that 'What makes my *Thinker* think is that he thinks not only with his brain, with his knitted brow, his distended nostrils and compressed lips, but with every muscle of his arms, back and legs, with his clenched fist and gripping toes.'⁴⁰ Gustave Kahn noted the animation and heightened expressive power that Rodin achieved particularly in his creation of hands 'that writhe as though to grasp the void, gather it up to knead and shape it into an ominous snowball furious hands, clenched hands rearing in their damnation.'⁴¹

Visitor reaction to the figure reveals a particular response to the physical properties of the plaster and the vigorous modelling achieved with that choice of material. Dircks, for example, described 'the white plastic mass [which] takes and gives out lights and reflections and marvellous beauties that no metal ever approaches.'⁴² It is worth

³⁷ Elsen, *Rodin's Thinker*, 75; *Speaker*, 30 January 1904, 427-8.

³⁸ A recent exhibition, *Chromas: Ancient Sculpture in Color*, reconstructed the polychromatic colours of pieces of classical sculpture. Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, 5 July 2022 – 26 March 2023.

³⁹ Auguste Rodin, *Art: Conversations with Paul Gsell*, trans. Jacques de Caso and Patricia B. Sanders, introduction by Jacques de Caso (California: University of California Press, 1984), 12.

⁴⁰ From an interview with Rodin in *Saturday Night*, Toronto, December 1917, quoted in Elsen, *Rodin* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1974), 52.

⁴¹ Gustave Kahn, 'Les Mains chez Rodin,' *La Plume*, trans. John Anzalone, in *Rodin in Perspective*, edited by Ruth Butler (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 106-7.

⁴² Rudolf Dircks, 'The "International" at the New Gallery: Works by Rodin at the Fourth Exhibition,' *Art Journal* (Feb. 1904): 39.

considering the language and implications of this description. Dircks suggests that, not only did *Le Grand Penseur* reflect the coloured marbles of the Hall and the natural light from the skylight, but that the sculpture also acted as a source of light, generating luminosity from its very form. Light suggests warmth, safety, visibility and life, and is also associated with the power and love of God: in the Gospel of St. John, Jesus refers to himself on two occasions as ‘the light of the world.’⁴³ Was Dircks suggesting that viewing the figure was analogous to a religious or mystical experience of some sort?

His phrase ‘marvellous beauties’ looks forward to the Manifesto of Surrealism of 1924, in which André Breton (1896-1966) claimed that ‘the marvellous is always beautiful, anything marvellous is beautiful, in fact only the marvellous is beautiful.’⁴⁴ Although Rodin pre-dates the advent of Surrealism, his fragmented works paved the way for a new type of modernity. Both the head and foot of *Le Grand Penseur* were exhibited as works within their own right. Rodin placed the left foot on a decorative plaster pedestal (Figure 156) which anticipates works by René Magritte, for whom the foot was a favourite image (Figure 157). Where Rodin re-frames the foot as an independent work of art whose expressive qualities were equivalent to the complete figure, Magritte plays with the pre-conception of what we expect to see. Both artists challenge the viewer’s visual and mental expectations through a fresh presentation of a known object.

A similar sense of awe, as suggested by Dircks above, is conveyed in an ostensibly unrelated article in the *Musical Standard* by the pianist and music critic Mrs. Franz Liebich.⁴⁵ She describes the silence that falls on a concert audience when ‘hushed by the magic of incomparable art’ and argues that those of true artistic temperament will be ‘spellbound’ in the same way as the first viewing of great art and architecture.⁴⁶ What is noteworthy is her choice of ‘great’ art works, with only one contemporary

⁴³ Gospel according to St. John, Chapters 8:12 and 9:5.

⁴⁴ André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen Lane (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1969 [1924]).

⁴⁵ Mrs Franz Liebich ‘Con Sordini,’ *Musical Standard*, 9 July, 1904, 20-21.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

piece included, indicating that she must have viewed *Le Grand Penseur* in the New Gallery earlier in 1904:

Standing in front of the great facades, of, say Chartres, Bourges, or Cologne cathedrals [or] Those who find themselves in presence of accredited *chef d'oeuvres*, such as da Vinci's *Monna Lisa*, Raffaele's *San Sisto*, or the modern statue of Rodin's "Penseur," are surely struck dumb with wonder and amazement...⁴⁷

Robert Louis Stevenson had reported a similar response on visiting Rodin's studio in Paris in 1886 where he viewed the *Gates* in their infancy.⁴⁸ After the visit Stevenson was profoundly moved and he explained how he and some friends 'came forth again into the streets of Paris, silenced, gratified, humbled in the thought of our own efforts.'⁴⁹ He recalled particularly how 'the solemn face of Dante over the great door still spoke to our imagination,' and it was this engagement with the viewer's mind and imagination that he suggested marked Rodin out from his contemporaries. Stevenson also claimed that 'The public are weary of statues that say nothing' and that, by contrast, Rodin's 'statues live and speak, and speak of things worth uttering.'⁵⁰ It is perhaps this last comment that is most pertinent, with the implication that Rodin's statues make demands on the viewer, that the viewer has to seriously engage when looking in order to comprehend the message emanating from one of his works. This sentiment was echoed by Edmund Gosse in a toast made to Rodin at the pre-exhibition dinner in 1904:

In Rodin we have a sculptor who has the most exquisite feeling for form, but he is also a great artist, for above all things he expresses in terms of sculpture the great human emotions. Go and stand before that huge statue of "The Thinker"

⁴⁷ Ibid. The spellings are those of the original text.

⁴⁸ Robert Louis Stevenson, 'Rodin and Zola,' *The Times*, 6 September 1886.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

and you can hear the majestic figure *thinking* – it grows into a live thing, glows in a strange vital way.⁵¹

Such focus on the inner thoughts of the figure resonated with the emerging fields of psychology and psycho-analysis which were prevalent in Europe during this period, partly as a result of the circulation of the ideas and writings of Sigmund Freud.⁵² Freud's publication of the *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1899 was followed, in 1901, with an abridged version entitled *On Dreams*. The aim of this second publication was to disseminate his theories to a wider audience by making them more accessible. Written in a more informal, colloquial style, Freud encouraged the reader to 'search for the meaning of dreams in a manner reminiscent of a detective novel.'⁵³

In Britain, developments in these new fields were somewhat delayed compared to the Continent, although James Sully's publication of *The Human Mind*, accepted as the first textbook of psychology, took place in 1892. In 1898, an expedition led by the anthropologist, Alfred Court Haddon, departed to the Torres Straits with the goal of studying the islanders' psychology, linguistics and sociology. The group included Britain's leading experimental psychologist, William Halse Rivers, who was also involved with the formation of the British Psychological Society in 1901, whose aim was 'to advance scientific psychological research, and to further the co-operation of investigators in the various branches of Psychology.'⁵⁴ The publication of the first issue of the *British Journal of Psychology* in 1904 confirmed the interest that academics, scientists, philosophers and the general public held in this developing field.

The decade of the 1890s has been described as one where 'Psychological process had replaced external reality as the most pressing topic for investigation. It was no longer

⁵¹ Edmund Gosse, quoted in *Academy and Literature*, 23 January 1904, 106-7.

⁵² Although Freud and Rodin never met, they shared a passion for collecting which was explored in the exhibition *Passion at Work: Rodin and Freud as Collectors*, Musée Rodin, 15 October 2008 – 22 February 2009.

⁵³ Jean-Michel Quinodoz, *Reading Freud: A chronological exploration of Freud's writings*, trans. David Alcorn (London: Routledge, 2005), 38.

⁵⁴ Geoff Bunn, 'A Short History of The British Psychological Society,' accessed 29 October 2023, <https://www.bps.org.uk/>.

what actually existed that seemed most important; it was what men thought existed.⁵⁵ Understanding these wider cultural and social experiences of the fin de siècle, particularly Freud's investigation of the unconscious mind, provides a way of reconstructing the impact of Rodin's *Penseur* at the New Gallery. In the same way that Freud encouraged a deep exploration of inner thoughts, so viewers of Rodin's sculpture questioned what was taking place inside the mind of the figure. In contrast to traditional sculpture, the gaze of the *Le Grand Penseur* is turned inward. The subject is not the figure itself but the experience that is taking place within, the experience of the inner self.

The Concept of Internationalism in 1904

Rodin was one of many French artists exhibiting in 1904 at the New Gallery. Others included Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, Simon Bussy, Henri Le Sidaner and Eugène Carrière. His Presidency reinforced the cosmopolitan aspirations of the International and reaffirmed its global outlook. Rodin had wide-ranging collectors, subscribers, and patrons from an international community across Britain, Ireland, France, Europe, Australia and the United States, which included the aforementioned Ionides, Frederic Leighton and Dr Max Linde. Linde owned six drawings and ten sculptures by Rodin including a bronze cast of the *Thinker* which he commissioned for his garden at Lübeck, Germany, and which was donated to the Detroit Institute in 1922. The original setting is immortalised in Eduard Munch's painting of the garden containing the figure. (Figure 158) During Rodin's lifetime the *Thinker* was reproduced for numerous locations including Buenos Aires, San Francisco, Venice, Sweden and Poland, while after his death this extended to include Russia, Serbia, China and Argentina. Rudolph Dircks declared that 'no living artist could so completely represent international feeling in matters of art.'⁵⁶

⁵⁵ H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890 – 1930* (London: Routledge, 2017), 16.

⁵⁶ Dircks, 'The "International" at the New Gallery,' 37.

Although 'international' by name, 'transnational' might be a more apt way to describe the selection and display policies of the Society, which were radically different to other international exhibitions of the time. Unlike the large-scale international expositions of the turn of the century, for example those held in Paris in 1900 and Turin in 1902, where displays were rigidly divided by nation, often in separate buildings or at the very least physically divided by barriers, the International Society presented artwork irrespective of nationality.⁵⁷ Lavery commented that prior to the founding of the International in 1898 'it was considered unpatriotic to include the foreign artist, and we had a hard struggle because few were really interested in art outside their own country.'⁵⁸ The International entered new ground by bringing together a wide-range of art from both inside and outside Britain. Furthermore, the hanging policies promoted mixing genre, style and subject matter, and included work by deceased artists as well as young artists at the beginning of their careers. This meant that exciting juxtapositions of works created fresh ways of interpreting the art on view.

It is noteworthy that, in the 1904 catalogue, addresses of all artists taking part were included in the index. Intriguingly the addresses were given increased prominence in 1906 and 1907 as they were printed within the body of the catalogue next to the name of the artist and title of artwork. However, by 1908 addresses in any form had been completely abandoned. It would seem that the earlier format was essentially divisive, with more attention focussing on distinguishing nationalities from one another than previously. This was certainly reflected in the press, with the *Illustrated London News*, for example, reviewing the artworks by nation, reporting that 'the most repulsive pictures come, not from Paris, but from Spain, while Germany contributes a series of etchings that are quite pre-eminent in sordid tragedy.'⁵⁹ It is evident that the decision to remove addresses altogether in 1908 was driven by a re-focus on the exhibitors as individual artists whose work transcended divisions of style due to national tendencies.

⁵⁷ Exposition Universelle of Paris, 1900. The displays of forty countries were housed in national pavilions. At the Turin exhibition of 1902, discussed in Chapter Two, displays were housed in sections named after each country.

⁵⁸ Lavery, *Life of a Painter*, 109.

⁵⁹ 'Art Notes,' *Illustrated London News*, 26 January 1907, 136.

The West Room: South Wall

The second photograph of Rodin surrounded by Council Members provides visual evidence concerning the hang of oil paintings at the exhibition. (Figure 146) Using the catalogue and a knowledge of the gallery spaces, it can be determined that the image shows the south wall of the West Room. In this photograph, the Council members are joined by two additional figures, Charles Cottet and Jacques Emile Blanche, both of whom are standing on Rodin's right. The men are assembled in front of Cottet's large painting of *Deuil Marin* which took prime position in the centre with smaller paintings arranged symmetrically around it, although Blanche's painting is obscured by the artist himself. (Figure 159) The wall contained thirteen paintings, those on the left of the photograph only evident by the edge of their frames, while there are two that are outside the image on the right. The hang was as follows:

- 130 A.K. Brown, *A Northern City*
- 131 W.M. Nicholson, *La Petite Marchande*
- 132 J.W. Morrice, *Regatta, San Malo*
- 133 J.E. Blanche, *Portrait of a Child*
- 134 J.W. Morrice, *Autumn, Paris*
- 135 E.A. Hornel, *A Little Lady*
- 136 Charles Cottet, *Deuil Marin*
- 137 E.A. Hornel, *Sloe Blossom*
- 138 James Charles, *Welcome Spring*
- 139 Carl Marr, *A Portrait*
- 140 Alexander Frew, *A Midsummer Day*
- 141 William Nicholson, *The End of the Morris Dance*
- 142 W.J. Bruckman, *Greenwich*

Of the ten artists represented in this section, two were French nationals (Cottet and Blanche), three Scottish (Frew, Hornel and Brown) and two English (Nicholson and Charles) while Canada, America and Holland were represented with one artist each. The artists did not necessarily live in their country of birth, with addresses for this

group limited to Paris, Scotland, England and Munich. In addition to the mix of nations, the display incorporated an assortment of subject matter: seascape, landscape with and without figures, portraits and city scenes. All artists were living artists, ranging in age from early 40s to early 50s, so considered to be at the height of their careers. The common link between the paintings was the impressionist style in which the works were executed, characterised by expressive brushwork, striving to capture the effects of light and shade, and with most canvasses executed outside rather than in a studio.

The West Room: British Art

On the west wall of the same Room, three of Whistler's paintings took centre stage in a fitting display for the recently-deceased first President of the Society: *Symphony in White, Rose et Or: La Tulipe* (unfinished) and *Valparaiso*. By this point, it had already been decided to hold a memorial exhibition of his works the following year at the New Gallery. Directly opposite his paintings, the work of three British artists dominated the display on the east wall: Strang (*The Mother*), Ricketts (*A Burial*) and Shannon (*The Toilet* and *The Lady with the Feather*). Although these artists and their wider circle (which included William Rothenstein, Charles Conder and Henry Tonks) were viewed as a distinct group in the Edwardian era bound by their interest in and reference to the Old Masters, they largely fell into obscurity after their deaths and are little known today. They feature rarely in exhibitions and their work has been largely overshadowed by the accepted start of Modern art heralded by Roger Fry's exhibition of 1910, *Manet and the Post-Impressionists*.⁶⁰

However, current scholarship from Grace Brockington, Morna O'Neill, Angus Trumble and the aforementioned essays by Pezzini and Shaw, draws attention to this group of artists.⁶¹ Pezzini underlines the 'proactive return to the European art of the past

⁶⁰ In 1979 the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge held an exhibition *All for Art: The Ricketts and Shannon Collection at the Fitzwilliam*. In 1981 an exhibition of William Strang's work was held in Sheffield, Glasgow and London. This was designed to be a reassessment of his work, which had not been seen in a solo exhibition since 1921.

⁶¹ Pezzini, '(Inter)national Art,' 159. See also Grace Brockington, ed. *Internationalism and the Arts in Britain and Europe at the Fin de Siècle* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), Morna O'Neill and Michael Hatt, eds. *The Edwardian Sense: Art, Design, and Performance in Britain, 1901-1910* (New Haven: Yale University

through the recuperation of themes and devices.⁶² She argues that this particular current was a vital element of modern art in Britain in the early twentieth century and therefore offers an alternative version of what constituted modern art at this time. Roger Fry certainly recognised and admired the output of this group of artists. In 1905, before he introduced new concepts of Modernism to the British public, he wrote:

Ten years ago the revolutionary forces were still strong; it still seemed worth while to destroy and deliberate; but the rising generation of artists, especially in England, is turning with a new reverence to the art of the past; it is beginning to realise that there are definite things to be learned, a positive knowledge to be acquired and handed from master to pupil.⁶³

Fry must have been referring to artists such as Shannon and Ricketts in his observation, although his views were redirected away from those artists whose work resonated with the traditional skill and quality of the Old Masters a few years later, in favour of the Post-Impressionist and Fauvist works.

A study of the International Society at the New Gallery presents an opportunity to revisit these artists and their work and to contribute to the latest scholarship. How did the New Gallery's spaces enhance the presentation and display of this art and what was visitor response to the International exhibitions at the gallery? Scottish artist William Strang, a painter and printer, had studied under Alphonse Legros at the Slade School of Art and, together with Shannon and Ricketts, he was based in London.⁶⁴ During the first decade of the twentieth century their work was included regularly in exhibitions and written about in reviews and longer articles in the art press. Of particular significance were the annual exhibitions with the International Society at the New Gallery, an exhibition at Agnews in 1906 and one held at the Carfax Gallery in

Press, 2010), Angus Trumble and Andrea Wolk Rager, eds. *Edwardian Opulence: British Art at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (Newhaven: Yale University Press, 2013). See also note 8.

⁶² Barbara Pezzini, '(Inter)national Art,' 159.

⁶³ Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy*, Introduction and Notes by Roger Fry. (London: Seeley, 1905), xx – xxi.

⁶⁴ There has been much speculation about the nature of the relationship between Shannon and Ricketts who lived in London together. See Delaney, 21-26, for an overview.

1907. Their work was regularly assessed in publications such as the *Studio*, the *Athenaeum* and the *Burlington Magazine*, and they received distinct support from the art historian and painter, Charles J. Holmes (1868-1936) who worked with Shannon and Ricketts at the Vale Press from 1896 to 1903.

In 1903 Holmes published *On Pictures and Collecting*, a guide for potential collectors of art.⁶⁵ In it he offered advice about what, how and where to buy art according to a variety of budgets. The limitations of the publication were made clear: suggestions were based on Holmes's personal opinions and focussed largely on oil paintings, his area of expertise. He acknowledged that collecting contemporary art was particularly challenging and suggested looking 'in modern pictures [for] the qualities which have made the old pictures immortal.'⁶⁶ Holmes drew particular attention to the work of Shannon and Ricketts whom he claimed demonstrated a 'marked individuality' in their art.⁶⁷ He went on to argue that:

Their work contains, however, so much of what is best in the art of the past, combined with real forcible personality, and is also so restricted in quantity, as to appear a very safe investment at present times.⁶⁸

The 'art of the past' received extensive interest in terms of scholarly publications and monographs during the 1900s. Laurence Binyon (1869-1943) edited and published a series entitled *The Artist's Library* which included a volume by Roger Fry on Giovanni Bellini (1899) and one on Goya by William Rothenstein (1900). This meant that interested readers had at their disposal a number of works on the leading Old Masters and could develop a familiarity with the art of this period. Furthermore, these publications gave artists the opportunity to view plates of lesser-known artworks to study style and subject matter.

⁶⁵ Charles J. Holmes, *Pictures and Picture Collecting*, (London: Anthony Treherne & Co., 1910).

⁶⁶ Holmes, *Pictures & Picture Collecting*, 35.

⁶⁷ Holmes, 37.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

In 1906 Agnews hosted *Independent Art of Today*, an exhibition which comprised fifty-two paintings by forty living artists, and which included two paintings each by Shannon and Strang and one by Ricketts.⁶⁹ Shaw and Pezzini's recently published paper analyses the economics of the exhibition using Agnews's stock books as their source.⁷⁰ Although not a commercial success - indeed 'records show clearly that Agnews made significant losses on their investment' – the authors argue convincingly that the show was 'a testing of the market to gauge the saleability of a promising group of artists,' indicating that this group, linked by their responses to older art, were perceived as an exciting gathering of young artists who were moving in a different direction from their contemporaries.⁷¹ The painting that gained most press attention was Ricketts's *The Betrayal*, a depiction of Judas betraying Jesus, now at the Tullie House Museum. (Figure 160) It was named 'the finest imaginative work in [the] exhibition' and 'one of the most powerful things here,' although Agnew's did not succeed in selling the painting until 1911 at a loss of sixty pounds sterling.⁷²

Ricketts and Shannon exhibited their work at a number of venues during the first decade of the twentieth century including a solo show for Ricketts in 1906 at the Dutch Gallery and a joint exhibition at the Carfax in 1907, where they were heralded as 'torchbearers' and their work described as 'deliberately derivative.'⁷³ Together with Strang, they took part in *Twenty Years of British Art, 1890-1910*, an exhibition staged at the Whitechapel Gallery in 1910 organised by the Director, Charles Aitken (1869-1936). The exhibition was designed to offer 'a fair review of recent developments in art,' although was restricted to artists who 'either entered the field or established their reputation during the period under review.'⁷⁴ Bearing these criteria in mind, the significant presence of these three artists at the exhibition is noteworthy. Of 569 artworks by 204 artists, Ricketts contributed nine works, Shannon eleven with one

⁶⁹ William Strang: *The Bathers* (National Galleries of Scotland), *Suppertime* (Potteries Museum, Stoke-on-Trent); Charles Shannon: *Tibullus in the house of Delia* (Nottingham City Museum), *The Mill Pond* (Manchester Art Gallery); Charles Ricketts: *The Betrayal* (Tullie House).

⁷⁰ Shaw and Pezzini, 'Agnew's Gallery, 1906,' 710-740.

⁷¹ Shaw and Pezzini, 718 and 735.

⁷² The painting was sold to Judge William Evans.

⁷³ *Academy*, 6 July 1907, 659-60.

⁷⁴ Preface, *Twenty Years of British Art*, 1910.

further joint work with Ricketts, but Strang dominated the show with twenty-three works, a total only surpassed by the Scottish artist Muirhead Bone.

The Eighth Exhibition, 1908

In 1908, Strang assumed the role of Vice President of the International after Lavery's resignation, in time for the Eighth exhibition at the New Gallery. Ricketts and Shannon were, at this point, both members of the Executive Council, usually a group of sixteen who worked alongside the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.⁷⁵ One hundred and eighty-four artists participated in the exhibition, thirty-two of whom were women, showing a total of four hundred and eighteen works. The index recorded four artists as 'deceased:' Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890), Herbert Goodall (1852-1907), Eugène Carrière (1849-1906) and Jules Dalou (1838-1902), although there were at least two more who were not acknowledged – Gauguin (1848-1903) and Cézanne (1839-1906). Whether this was an oversight or not remains unclear.

Since there are no known installation photographs of the exhibition, the material traces are limited to written sources and the extant, traceable artworks themselves. However, a close reading and analysis of the catalogue does reveal information about the selection and display of works, while also indicating how the spaces were used specifically for this exhibition. Of the eleven members of the Executive Council who exhibited oil paintings in 1908, ten of these had their work displayed in the West Room, with a total of eighteen paintings.⁷⁶ Three artists – Strang, Anthony Ludovici and George Sauter – showed, in addition, one work each in the North Gallery, while August Neven du Mont had only one painting on display, which hung in the North Room. This strongly indicates that even in 1908, twenty years after the founding of the Gallery, the West Room continued to be perceived as the most prestigious exhibition space. Was this the result of any particular physical qualities of the room or was it instead connected to the historic associations of the space, the fact that it had been

⁷⁵ Shannon was voted onto the committee in 1905 and Ricketts in 1907.

⁷⁶ A. Ludovici, E.A. Walton, J.E. Blanche, W. Strang, C. Ricketts, C. Shannon, Morley Fletcher, J. Lavery, Francis Howard and George Sauter.

established as the prime place to exhibit since the inaugural Summer Exhibition of 1888 when Burne-Jones's paintings dominated the west wall?

In addition to housing so many paintings by members of the Council, the selection of other works, together with the way they were presented, showcased International Society policies. The display cut across national boundaries and mixed paintings by genre, style and date. At least twelve nationalities were represented in the West Room, with the majority of works by French, Scottish and English artists. However, the selection also included one Hungarian – Lajos Szlányi (1869-1949), one Canadian – James W. Morrice (1865-1924), one Pole – Olga de Boznanska (1865-1940) and an Australian – George Washington Lambert (1873-1930).⁷⁷ The latter three were Associate Members of the Society, but Szlányi was one of a number of non-members allowed to exhibit, a new policy established in 1908.

The range of genre was broad and encompassed portraits (John Lavery: *Miss Pauline Chase as Peter Pan*), landscapes (Frank Morley Fletcher: *Winter Stillness*), cityscapes (Ludovici: *The Marble Arch*) and still life paintings (Monet: *Fruits*). The catalogue reveals that the various genres were mingled on the walls, which indicates a similar desire for an overall aesthetic hang as was apparent in the photograph of the West Room in 1904. Nevertheless, other factors should also be considered, including the importance of particular walls, the centre spot on those walls, and the reputation of select artists or paintings, all of which may well have been factors which influenced the hang. Particular juxtapositions of works of art invoked comparisons and fresh ways of interpreting compositions, and it is distinctly possible that these juxtapositions were created deliberately.

Perhaps one of the most striking policies of the International was to mix paintings by young contemporaries with those of older or deceased artists, transforming the spaces of the New Gallery into a place which identified and distinguished the best art from all periods of time. A successful marketing policy, the inclusion of a few well-known works

⁷⁷ Lambert was born in Russia but emigrated to Australia, in 1887.

by these established artists helped to attract viewers and potential purchasers. In the West Room this policy was evident: the oldest living artist represented was Claude Monet (born 1840), followed by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (born 1841); at the other end of the spectrum was the youngest living artist, Henry Samuel Teed born in 1883, whose painting *An Autumn Evening* hung at number 125. Artists thus ranged from age sixty-eight down to twenty-five years old.⁷⁸ The decision to place two works by Renoir, one by Cézanne and two by Monet in the West Room reinforces the argument that this was the most prestigious place to exhibit.

Pictorial Dynamics: West wall of the West Room, 1908

Although there are no diagrams to indicate where paintings hung, nor any installation photographs from which to work, it is possible to estimate where specific works were placed from knowledge of the New Gallery spaces acquired whilst researching this thesis. The catalogue indicated a route for the visitor which, for this exhibition, commenced in the South Room and continued into the West and then the North, before taking in the Central Hall and finally the Balcony. The West Room had two entrances, both on the east wall, one near to the South Room and the other close to the North Room. Following the above route, it would have been natural to enter the West Room from the entrance closest to the South Room. If this were the case, the numbering would commence immediately to the left of this door, giving (usually) three paintings on the small section of wall before turning onto the south wall.

Using this reasoning, I think it is strongly possible that Renoir's *Portrait of Madame M.* (1871) hung in the centre of the west wall, the most prominent spot in the Gallery, flanked by two paintings by Ricketts and two by Monet (probably above and below each other) and one each by Strang and Shannon, potentially creating a symmetrical display. The Renoir was a full-length portrait, standing nearly one-and-a-half metres high and nearly one metre wide. It was also a well-known painting, having been exhibited a number of times previously, including at the International Society exhibition

⁷⁸ Teed was killed in action in 1916.

of 1899 where it received considerable notice.⁷⁹ The painting was owned by the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel from 1898, and was loaned to the exhibition via the negotiations of Ludovici. In 1908 it again received substantial press coverage, this time from the *Studio* and *Athenaeum*, which substantiates the theory of its prominent position.⁸⁰

The centre of the west wall of the West Room, according to the above observations, was presented as follows:

- 139 William Strang, *Solitude* (Figure 161)
- 140 Claude Monet, *Vue de Hollande*, untraced
- 141 Charles Ricketts, *The Resurrection* (Figure 162)
- 142 Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Portrait de Madame M.* (Figure 163)
- 143 Charles Ricketts, *Don Juan in Hell* (Figure 164)
- 144 Claude Monet, *Printemps*, untraced
- 145 Charles Shannon, *Children of the Sea*, untraced and can find no mention of the painting, although he executed a number of seascapes with figures

This hang reflected the policies of the International to mix genre of painting with nationality of artist, while also showing a range of art that dated from 1871 (Renoir's portrait) to 1907 (Ricketts's *Don Juan*), spanning thirty-six years. The display comprised one nude, two landscapes/country scenes by Monet, two paintings of religious subjects, a full-length portrait and what was probably an imaginative seascape by Shannon. Those artists represented were either well-established French Impressionist painters (Monet and Renoir) or members of the Executive Council of the International, including the Vice-President. That they should be located on the centre of the west wall of the West Room makes perfect sense.

⁷⁹ D.S. MacColl, 'Review,' *Saturday Review*, 27 May 1899, 651.

⁸⁰ 'The International Society's Exhibition,' *Studio* Vol. 18, no. 179 (1908): 56-61; *Athenaeum* 25 January 1908, 109-110.

Strang's canvas depicts a sleeping nude lying in the foreground of a pastoral landscape. As it is now known only from a photograph, the palette cannot be assessed. The painting had been exhibited at least twice previously, firstly in 1892 at the Royal Academy (Gallery Nine, catalogue number 874) and later in 1898 at the First Exhibition of the Vienna Secession, where it was displayed together with four additional works by Strang.⁸¹ Philip Athill suggests that it forms part of 'an intermittent series of arcadian nude' works which includes compositions such as *Bathers*, exhibited in 1893 at the New English Art Club.⁸² His etchings show some similar arrangements, particularly one held at Princeton which depicts a female nude in the same pose but facing the other way. (Figure 165) In *Solitude* the curves of Strang's nude echo the curves of the landscape behind, with the highest part of her body, her right hip, below the apex of the hills. Her body slopes gently downwards towards the right corner of the painting, the hill tracing the descent; the strong horizontals convey a sense of calm. The figure's hair flows out across the ground and she rests partially on a length of flowing fabric, which seems to be organically connected to the earth beneath.

The painting evokes the pastoral landscapes of both Giorgione and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, seen for example in Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*. (Figure 166) Yet in contrast to this earlier work Strang's nude is not obviously provocative, nor does her pose suggest an alluring sexuality, although the vulnerability of her naked form whilst asleep does invite the viewer's gaze. Unlike the figure in the *Sleeping Venus*, where an arm is flung out to expose the torso, the nude's upper body in Strang's painting remains protectively covered as she sinks into the ground on her side. The pose is more reminiscent of Donato Creti's *Naked Male Asleep* (Figure 167) where the figure's upper half is twisted downwards, hiding this section of the body. Strang appears to be depicting sleep as rest, where physical or emotional labour has caused exhaustion. A similar idea is conveyed in Millet's *Noon Day Rest* of 1866 although here the figures are fully clothed and set against the backdrop of their work.

⁸¹ Philip Athill states that the painting was exhibited in Vienna with the title *Loneliness*, rather than *Solitude*. However, the German word *Einsamkeit* translates as both – there are no words in German to differentiate between the two concepts.

⁸² Anne Goodchild, *William Strang, RA, 1859-1921* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1980), 18.

Strang's figure lies in a physical reality but any dreams she may be experiencing are untouchable by the viewer; they are her own unique encounters. It is only by interpreting the landscape surrounding her that the viewer can attempt to engage in her innermost subconscious. In the same way that visitors to the exhibition of 1904 queried the innermost thoughts of *Le Grand Penseur* encouraged by recent theories of psycho-analysis, viewers of Strang's painting in 1908 may also have contemplated the suggested, but unseen dreams taking place in the figure's mind. Yet in sleep, despite her relaxed, innocent pose, the figure assumes a posture that closely resembles death. The juxtaposition of these two states was depicted in a particularly striking way by John William Waterhouse in *Sleep and his Half-Brother Death* (Figure 168). At the International exhibition the close association between sleep and death was heightened through the precise arrangement of placing Strang's painting next to Ricketts's *The Resurrection*, a starkly clear interpretation of life after death.

Ricketts' painting, now in the Tullie House Museum, was executed in 1900 although apparently not exhibited prior to 1908, and portrays the dead in the state of resurrection.⁸³ In contrast to Strang's painting with its structure of strong horizontals, *The Resurrection* is a portrait-shaped canvas with powerful verticals. The dramatic movement both up and down the canvas effectively divides it in half. On the right the saved souls rise towards heaven, their bodies creating building blocks in a way that is reminiscent of Burne-Jones's *Wheel of Fortune*, as well as a later painting by Ricketts, *Chimeras* (or *chacun sa chimère*, Figure 169). On the left of the canvas of *The Resurrection* an angel dives head first with arms outstretched towards a crawling figure struggling to escape from its shroud, the angel's pose echoing an inverted version of Christ on the cross.

The Resurrection, with its religious subject matter, dark palette and sense of despair, hung next to Renoir's portrait which had been painted twenty-nine years previously.

⁸³ I have not found any mention of this painting before 1908, although the date of it is given as 1900. Tullie House Museum list it with the title *Resurrection of the Dead*, but in 1908 it was exhibited with the title *The Resurrection*.

On the far side, Ricketts's other oil, *Don Juan in Hell* was positioned to create symmetry and balance in the display. Renoir's portrait dates to 1871 and depicts Rapha Maître, the long-term mistress of Renoir's friend Louis-Edmond Maître (1840-1898) who was a musician and conductor. Very little is known about Rapha (whose real name was Camille), except that she originated from Belgium. She met Maître in his student days and they remained a couple from that time until his death in 1898, with her assuming his surname although they never married.

The painting depicts Rapha wearing a highly ornamented fashionable dress standing in a heavily decorated interior. She is shown in three-quarter view next to a gilded birdcage containing four budgerigars, and looks through an unseen window. The painting incorporates numerous flowers including purple pansies under the birdcage, an arum lily and red hyacinths. When first exhibited in London, at the International exhibition of 1899, D.S McColl declared that it was:

as near perfection in its kind as painting can go. The passage of light across the head the neck and the shoulder, the discrimination of muslin stuff, of the arm showing through, the transparencies and thickenings of the delicious creams and yellows.⁸⁴

In 1908 it was just as well received, with the *Athenaeum* claiming:

It is an extraordinary painting, full of sap, yet of wonderful refinement, a riot of strange and vivid hues wondrously in accord, a harmony in which the biting, translucent green of the leaf of an arum lily and the flood of golden light that fills the bird-cage are exquisite notes.⁸⁵

The reviews highlighted Renoir's use of colour, the decorative qualities of Rapha's dress and the detailed depiction of objects. Placed, as it was in 1908, between the two paintings by Ricketts with their sombre hues and complex subject matters, the Renoir

⁸⁴ Quoted in Kate Flint *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception* (London: Routledge, 1984), 337.

⁸⁵ *Athenaeum*, 25 January 1908, 109.

clearly stood out as a masterpiece that was still admired. The deliberate juxtaposition of these three works placed Rapha between the heaven of *The Resurrection* and the hell of *Don Juan*. As will be discussed in due course, the presentation of Rapha in this painting is open to interpretation, but her personal narrative, which may have appeared idyllic to outsiders, was in fact both complex and rather tragic.

Conversations across the Room

Shannon's painting in this section of the west wall (*Children of the Sea*) is missing and untraced, but his other submission to the exhibition, *A Souvenir of the International Ball (Miss Kathleen Bruce)* was placed directly opposite Renoir's portrait. (Figure 170) Both Shannon's works proved to be popular with the critics, with Ricketts commenting that there was generally 'a small crowd round' his two paintings, while the *Studio*, which included a photograph of the painting of Bruce, judged the work to be 'quite brilliant.'⁸⁶ The subject for Shannon's work was another artist: Kathleen Bruce (1878-1947), a well-respected sculptor and member of the International Society who had four works on view at the exhibition including a bust of Shannon himself.⁸⁷

Bruce trained at the Slade School in 1900 before moving to Paris where she attended the Académie Colarossi. In Paris she met Rodin, who in turn introduced her to a wide circle of artists and intellectuals including Isadora Duncan, who became a lifelong friend. Although not a formal pupil of Rodin's, Bruce visited his studios each Saturday and recalled that, 'I would watch in amazement to see him draw, never taking his eyes off the model, never looking at all at his paper.'⁸⁸ On her return to London, Bruce befriended Shannon and Ricketts, referring to them collectively as 'the RickyShan.'⁸⁹ From Ricketts's diaries, it is clear that Shannon was entranced with Bruce, sufficiently

⁸⁶Letter from Ricketts to W.A. Pye, March 1908, quoted in Delaney, *Charles Ricketts*, 230. Pye, in 1908, owned Ricketts's *Resurrection of the Dead*. He lived at Priest's Hill, Limpsfield. *Studio*, Vol. 179 (February, 1908). 58.

⁸⁷ Busts of *Alexander Crowley*, *Charles Shannon*, *Charles Ricketts* and *Max Beerbohm*, all in the Central Hall. Numbers 266, 312, 316 and 318.

⁸⁸ Kathleen, Lady Kennet, *Self-Portrait of an Artist, from the Diaries and Memoirs of Lady Kennet, Kathleen, Lady Scott*, (London: John Murray, 1949), 42.

⁸⁹ Louisa Young, *A Great Task of Happiness: The Life of Kathleen Scott* (London: Hydraulic Press, 1995), 93.

so for Ricketts to be concerned that they might marry.⁹⁰ Her vivid personality, combined with her artistic and intellectual skills, enchanted Shannon and she sat for him for several portraits. Although she claimed to be ‘the first woman he had ever loved,’ her own interests lay elsewhere. In 1908 she met and married Captain Robert Falcon Scott, who was to die tragically in the Antarctic in 1912.⁹¹

Shannon’s portrait depicts Bruce seated on a sofa enveloped in a soft pink ballgown and positioned in front of a painted wooden screen. The screen was probably from Shannon’s studio as it had appeared previously in a portrait of *Barbara Shore Nightingale, Lady Stephen* (Figure 171) and can be seen again in the later painting of *Miriam* (Figure 172).⁹² Bruce’s dress is likely to be the one she had worn to the International Ball at the close of the exhibition in 1907. There are several references to a fancy-dress code at the Ball, and this may explain why Bruce’s gown gives the impression of being more Victorian than Edwardian in style, with a crinoline skirt to create a silhouette that had been achieved in the sixteenth century with the use of a farthingale.

The colour of the dress, however, was highly fashionable. One of the leading dress designers of the Edwardian period, Lucile (Lady Duff-Gordon), whose use of soft fabrics and pastel colours became her signature style, had, in 1905, designed a dress in similar colours to that worn by Bruce. (Figure 173) In 1932, Shannon’s painting, then in the ownership of Sir Alexander Kay Muir (1868-1951), was exhibited at the Stirling Art Gallery Exhibition. At this point it was given the title *La Robe Rose*, placing emphasis on the colour of the dress rather than the sitter. Now owned by the Cleveland Museum of Art, the painting is listed with its original title on their website.⁹³

⁹⁰ J.G.P. Delaney, *Charles Ricketts: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 219-221.

⁹¹ Kathleen, Lady Kennet, *Self-Portrait of an Artist*, 84.

⁹² Shannon’s near fatal accident of 1928, a fall from which he never fully recovered, took place when rehangng *Miriam* on its return from an exhibition.

⁹³ The Cleveland Museum of Art, accessed 17 September 2023, <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1979.16#>.

The use of colour, as well as the formal structure of the portrait, with Bruce seated on a decorative sofa in evening dress, connects Shannon to other society portrait painters from this period including John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) and Giovanni Boldini (1842-1931). Sargent's *Mrs Carl Meyer and her Children* (Figure 174) portrays the sitter in a pale pink ballgown with white lace and black trimmings, holding an open fan and perched on the edge of an equally decorative sofa. In Boldini's painting of *Mrs Lionel Phillips* (1903), the sitter assumes a similar position and is also dressed in glamorous attire, exuding beauty and confidence. (Figure 175) Shannon's oeuvre contains a number of sketches and additional oil paintings which reveal an interest in dress fabric, its texture and qualities of movement. A lithograph at the Fitzwilliam Museum, *The Fantastic Dress* (1890) depicts a woman in a Victorian dress, with pinched waist and mushrooming skirts. (Figure 176) She has her back to the viewer, and, although there is a sofa on view, this is not for the sitter, but rather to create a perch for two cats. Shannon's interest, once again, is in the decorative qualities of the dress which is covered with flowers.

The hang of the West Room, with Kathleen Bruce staring out of her canvas across the space towards Rapha Maitre who, in turn, gazed across towards the window in her painting, encouraged a dialogue between the two women which offers a new way to interpret the works. As in earlier chapters, the significance to the audience is explored by examining particular juxtapositions of works within a specific exhibition context. The paintings can be understood within the wider cultural and political contexts of women's suffrage. Between 1871 and 1908 - the dates of the two portraits - great progress had been made in fighting for women's rights, with a march of more than three thousand women from Hyde Park Corner to the Strand in support of women's suffrage taking place on 9 February 1907, an event that became known as the Mud March. 1907 also marked the year of the first edition of one of the earliest suffrage newspapers, *Votes for Women*, published by the Reformer's Press between 1907 and 1918. The political and cultural ramifications of the movement as a whole were widespread, and visitors to the International exhibition of 1908 would have been well aware of events, or perhaps were supporters and participants themselves. By the early years of the twentieth century more women had also completed a formal artistic

education, with the Slade School of Art opening its doors to both men and women from its inception in 1871, providing opportunities for talented artists like Bruce.

Bruce, in Shannon's canvas, represents the liberated woman. She is financially independent, admired by both men and women for her intelligence and her skill as an artist. She gazes directly at the viewer, challenging any suggestion that she is a purely decorative object. She is feminine, certainly, with soft, flowing curves, and gentle pinks and blues in her costume, but her look is quietly assertive. Although there is a screen behind Bruce, which might have the effect of trapping the sitter, it simply serves to push her forward to the front of the picture plane. She gives the impression of being free to step out of the picture, with nothing between her and the viewer. By contrast, Rapha appears confined in her interior space, her captivity symbolised by the birds that are trapped in their cage beside her. She gazes towards the window at the outside world, although it is beyond her grasp. Rapha is decorative, as is her dress and the surroundings of the room, so that she blends into the background, reflecting an ambiguous position in life: this was a woman who had no status except as the mistress of a well-known man. On Maître's death in May 1898, Rapha received very little of his possessions apart from two portraits of herself by Renoir, this being one of them.⁹⁴ She proceeded to sell it almost immediately to the dealer Durand Ruel, who eventually sold it on to Auguste Pellerin (1853-1929). The lower part of Renoir's portrait can be seen in Matisse's portrait of Pellerin of 1916, but the identity of Rapha is completely lost as she simply becomes an object within the possessions of another man. (Figure 179)

Conversations with the past

Having examined select paintings as individual works and also uncovered underlying narratives in the West Room through analysing the pictorial dynamics, the final section of this chapter is directed to thinking about how visitor response may have been conditioned by previous encounters of the work of other artists on the walls of the

⁹⁴ See Sotheby's website for more information. Accessed 18 September 2023, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2004/impressionist-and-modern-art-evening-sale-104007/lot.12.html>.

New Gallery. When viewers arrived at the gallery in 1908 they had the opportunity to observe and examine the works from a number of perspectives, creating a 'multiplicity of levels of reading' the objects on display.⁹⁵ At first sight, the works of Shannon and Ricketts presented examples of a particular style and approach which referenced the Old Masters. However, these specific references to older art had the potential to activate the memory of viewing works of the Old Masters themselves at earlier exhibitions at the New Gallery. Exploring this argument, I would like to demonstrate how the paintings of Ricketts engaged with an earlier exhibition of Spanish art, while Shannon's work resonated with an exhibition of Venetian art, both held at the New Gallery in the late nineteenth century.

The heavy outlines, elongated figures and tortured poses of Ricketts's submissions in 1908 evoke certain works by El Greco, such as *The Vision of St. John* (Figure 178). A similar sense of psychological despair is apparent in Ricketts's painting of *The Resurrection*. Like El Greco, Ricketts depicts twisted forms, dark, anguished skies and groups of figures reaching upwards. Ricketts had seen El Greco's work first-hand during visits to Europe and in 1903 published *The Prado and its Masterpieces*, which included lengthy references to El Greco's work. He perceived El Greco's style to be 'founded entirely on Tintoretto at his wildest and most mannered phase; his figures are torn to shreds by a wind of passion.'⁹⁶

Twelve years previously, El Greco's work had hung on the same walls at the New Gallery in a ground-breaking exhibition of Spanish Art from December 1895 to March 1896. The coexistence of multiple narratives within the space highlights the significance of the earlier exhibition of Spanish art at the New Gallery and provides another example of how the gallery was at the forefront of introducing alternative types of art to the public. This was the first large scale exhibition devoted to the work of the Spanish masters and coincided with Lionel Harris's retail gallery opening at 127

⁹⁵ Machado, 49.

⁹⁶ Charles Ricketts, *The Prado and its Masterpieces* (London: Constable, 1903), 58.

Regent Street selling Spanish art, antiques and artefacts.⁹⁷ Harris lent eighteen items to the New Gallery exhibition, more than any other dealer, including valuable items of embroidery and ecclesiastical objects, such as a blue and gold cope.⁹⁸

This earlier exhibition largely showcased the work of Velasquez, Murillo, Zuberan and Goya; nonetheless, there were seven paintings by El Greco on view, including *Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple*, at the time owned by Sir Francis Cook. (Figure 177) This painting and four others by the artist were hung in the North Room, with two in the West and one in the South. As Enriqueta Harris-Frankfort effectively argues in her essay 'El Greco's "Fortuna Critica" in Britain,' although other Spanish artists were more widely collected during this period, El Greco's paintings remained a rarity in British collections, either private or public.⁹⁹ Ruskin had relegated Spanish art into 'the lowest possible aesthetic category' in his *Stones of Venice*, while in Chambers *Biographical Dictionary* of 1889, El Greco had been dismissed as the man 'who painted horrors in the Escorial.'¹⁰⁰ With this general consensus on the artist's work, it was a daring move by the New Gallery to include any of his paintings in the exhibition of 1895.

It was not until 1913, when Roger Fry wrote a strong appraisal of El Greco for the *Burlington Magazine*, that the artist became more widely accepted. Fry admired 'the extraordinary nature of El Greco's genius,' and described in some detail the features of the artist's paintings which included the 'magnificent design of falling draperies' and the 'astonishing design of the sky.'¹⁰¹ However, this was some seventeen years after the New Gallery had introduced his work at the Spanish exhibition and five years after Ricketts's paintings hung on the walls, recalling and referring to the previous layer.

⁹⁷ There had been the occasional showing of Spanish art before this, for example when the Marlborough Gallery exhibited select works by Velasquez from the Prado in 1892, but no large-scale, comprehensive exhibition.

⁹⁸ Nigel Glendinning and Hilary Macartney eds., *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1920*. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis, 2010), 71.

⁹⁹ Glendinning and Macartney, *Spanish Art*, 137.

¹⁰⁰ Glendinning and Macartney, *Spanish Art*, 137 and 245.

¹⁰¹ Roger Fry, 'Some Pictures by El Greco,' *Burlington Magazine* Vol. 24, No. 127 (1913): 3.

In the same way that Ricketts's stylistic referencing of El Greco is intensified through the knowledge that El Greco's work had hung on the walls of the New Gallery twelve years earlier, so there are links between Shannon's painting and an exhibition of Venetian Art held at the gallery between January and March 1895. In this instance, the connection between the layers is more remarkable as Shannon's canvas of Bruce hung in exactly the same position as Titian's *Diana and Actaeon* at the earlier exhibition.¹⁰² (Figure 180)

Shannon's style, his use of colour and his loose brushwork had been linked to the art of the two great Venetian masters, Titian and Giorgione, since the late nineteenth century. By drawing on the work of Titian, in particular, Shannon demonstrated his own connoisseurship, while also bestowing the aristocratic elegance of Titian's (largely) noble sitters on his own subjects who were mainly friends and other artists. Shannon and Ricketts visited Venice in 1899 and again in 1903, although Ricketts was not to publish his work on Titian until 1910. In 1907, just before the exhibition opened at the New Gallery, Laurence Binyon labelled Shannon 'the English Giorgione,' while select reviews of the International Society exhibition prepared the audience for the connection between the contemporary artist and the Italian masters, declaring that 'Charles Shannon is held, mind and hand, by memories of the craft of the great Venetians.'¹⁰³

Furthermore, Shannon's painting of Bruce triggered specific stylistic and formal references to the Italian master, especially in the application of colour, such as 'the splash of blue from a Titian.'¹⁰⁴ The careful application of blue across Shannon's canvas creates a way of reading the painting: the colour is evident in the fragile ribbons dotted across the skirt, in the blue cornflower of the bouquet on Bruce's lap and in the painted screen behind her. An equivalent blue can be found in Titian's *Diana and Actaeon*.

¹⁰² At number 166, Titian's painting must have also hung near the centre of the east wall in a very similar spot to Shannon's painting, if not exactly the same place.

¹⁰³ 'Art and Artists,' *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 8 January 1908, 6.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

Examining Shannon's portrait of Bruce, a further reference to Titian is apparent when appraising the details of objects within the painting. In addition to the flowers on her lap and the fan in her hand, Bruce is wearing one evening glove, with the other out of sight from the viewer. This recalls Titian's *Man with a Glove* where the mystery of the ungloved hand remains unsolved. (Figure 176) The glove in Shannon's painting may be interpreted symbolically, as a direct reference to the relationship (or lack of) between artist and sitter. The wearing of one glove in portraiture has a tradition that goes back to the sixteenth century, where a glove might be removed to better show off jewellery, cuffs or the natural elegance of a hand. In Shannon's painting, Bruce's bare hand does reveal a ring on the smallest finger. But it was also common practice to remove one glove and give it to a favourite, with the direct contact that the glove had with skin suggesting the erotic. Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones in 'Fetishizing the Glove in Renaissance Europe,' argue that 'gloves, like hands, were given and taken as the embodied form of social acts – the bonding of friend to friend, of lover to lover.'¹⁰⁵ Could it be interpreted in this way? Perhaps Shannon is suggesting to the viewer that the missing glove was in his possession at this point, importing both a formal feature from Titian, as well as the meaning connected to this feature in the earlier painting.

Shannon and Ricketts were integral to the success of the International exhibitions as representatives of a new group of painters, as Council members and also as collectors loaning their works. In addition to the annual shows, the International organised a Whistler Memorial Exhibition at the New Gallery in 1905, and also revived a format dating to 1894 of Exhibitions of Fair Women, held at the New Gallery in 1908 and 1909.¹⁰⁶ In 1909 the Fair Women Exhibition included eighty-eight works of Japanese prints and original drawings loaned by Shannon and Ricketts which were displayed on the Balcony. The pair were among the most informed connoisseurs of Oriental art at this time, with both taking a particular interest in the art of Japan. Their collection began in the early 1890s, but a substantial purchase at the sale of Captain Frank

¹⁰⁵ Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Fetishizing the Glove in Renaissance Europe,' *Critical Enquiry* Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn 2001): 118.

¹⁰⁶ See Meaghan Clarke, *Fashionability, Exhibition Culture and Gender Politics Fair Women* (London: Routledge, 2020).

Brinkley in November 1898 resulted in the acquisition of fifty-three drawings by Hokusai (1760-1849), with a further two hundred works attributed to the artist.¹⁰⁷ Although Japanese art had a growing following in the early twentieth century, the display at the New Gallery in 1909 was one of the earliest and most substantial at a commercial gallery in London.

The series of International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers exhibitions brought a fresh layer of meaning to the spaces at the New Gallery. For the first time, the venue engaged with issues pertinent to the early years of the twentieth century, including the growing interest in psychology and the human mind, and the suffrage of women. The Society also challenged the concept of how international art should be presented, and the spaces in Regent Street, with their capacious walls, good lighting and easy access, provided an ideal place to display the best art from around the world without reference to national styles. With Rodin following Whistler as President, the Society established a cosmopolitan outlook and encouraged viewers and buyers from around the world. Furthermore, Rodin's work represented a new type of sculpture, one which challenged the viewer and, in the case of *Le Grand Penseur*, also challenged the physical space it occupied.

The leading British artists of the day, including Strang, Shannon and Ricketts, were well represented at the New Gallery, their work reflecting a new interest in the art of the past which they reframed and reinterpreted within a contemporary context. In the first decade of the twentieth century this group of artists were connected to a progressive, novel movement and their work was exhibited only by those venues and societies which operated outside the confines of the Royal Academy. However, by 1910 the art world had moved to take a fresh approach to the concept of Modernism. Fry and others directed viewers and buyers away from this group and towards the work of the Fauves, the Cubists and Expressionists. Shannon's work swiftly became associated with more mainstream art, reflected in his election to Associate Member of the RA in 1911 and to full Academician in 1920.

¹⁰⁷ The sale took place at Christie's on 18 & 19 November 1898.

1909 marked the penultimate year of operation for the New Gallery. After the Exhibition of Fair Women in March, 1909, only four more shows took place before the space was remodelled and refunctioned into a restaurant. The Summer Exhibition was followed with an exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society in September, that of the Society of Portrait Painters in November, and finally the Ninth Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society exhibition in January 1910. After twenty-two years and seventy-eight exhibitions, one of the most significant art venues in London closed its doors, forcing artists and buyers to look elsewhere for display and purchase opportunities.

Conclusion

When the New Gallery closed its doors for the final time in February, 1910, it was lamented by the *Burlington Magazine* as ‘a calamity to art.’¹ The article likened the closure of the gallery to ‘a sacrifice to the Moloch of modern civilisation,’ and continued to use language framing the event in these terms with phrases such as ‘slaughtered on the same altar’ and ‘the destruction of the shrine of art.’² The word Moloch comes from the Biblical Hebrew and is associated with practices which include child sacrifice. Whether intentional or not, this recalls the Harry Furniss cartoon from *Punch* (analysed in the Introduction) which depicted Hallé and Comyns Carr baptising their child, the New Gallery, in the impluvium of the Central Hall. The journal blamed the sacrifice of the gallery entirely on the public for their lack of support and general apathy towards contemporary art, and condemned the refunctioning and commercialisation of the site to become a restaurant.

How is it that the New Gallery was considered, at that moment, to be fundamental to the London art world, yet has since been lost to obscurity? Press reviews, such as that from the *Burlington Magazine*, provide compelling evidence confirming the centrality of the gallery to activities in the exhibiting, production and sale of art at the fin de siècle. The *Art Chronicle* supported this view, declaring it to be ‘an institution which has always lived up to a really high aesthetic ideal’ and ‘fulfilled its purpose consistently and with undeniable distinction,’ while the New Zealand newspaper, the *Press*, in a four-page article deploring its demise, insisted that the gallery was ‘so closely associated with the highest achievements of modern art.’³ Several papers drew attention to those exhibitions which they felt had been most successful: the series of ‘finely organized antiquarian displays, the Tudor, Stuart, and Guelph,’ those ‘of Early

¹ ‘The New Gallery,’ *Burlington Magazine* Vol. 16, no. 83 (February 1910): 253-254.

² *Ibid.*

³ ‘The Passing of the New Gallery,’ *Art Chronicle* (February 1910); ‘The Closing of the New Gallery,’ *Press*, 11 June 1910, 8. This New Zealand newspaper had an English correspondent between 1908 and 1910, Guy Scholefield, who is probably the author of this article.

Florentine, Umbrian and Lombard Masters,' and 'the separate exhibitions of the works of Burne-Jones, Watts and Rossetti' which 'have been memorable achievements.'⁴

Moreover, there was recognition and critical acclaim for the way the New Gallery championed the more radical, progressive artists' societies which represented 'such important developments of modern artistic progress.'⁵ The *Athenaeum* and *Studio* applauded the gallery for their early recognition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, while the *Press* also identified the Arts and Crafts, as well as the International and the Society of Portrait Painters, which 'owe most of their vitality' to the support of the New Gallery.⁶ Six years earlier, in 1904, Dugald Sutherland MacColl noted the significance of 'the independent forces [of art which] are ranged in three main bodies, the New English Art Club, the Arts and Crafts Society and the International,' the latter two being based at the New Gallery.⁷ The identification of the New Gallery in providing these leading societies with unsurpassed exhibition space confirmed the venue's reputation during this period.

It has been a major aim of this thesis to reinstate the New Gallery in its rightful position as a leading exhibition venue of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Meticulous research and analysis of the building and its environment, identification of the seventy-eight exhibitions organised in its spaces, and an evaluation of the societies which based themselves at the Regent Street premises, firmly establish the New Gallery as pivotal and forward-thinking, supporting new artistic ideals, encouraging discourse and debate, and showcasing the best of art from Britain and further afield.

An additional outcome of the wide-ranging research is the new information which has come to light to offer a fuller picture of the art world at the fin de siècle. This suggests a more complex, rich and diverse London scene which was neither, as has been previously suggested, divided neatly between Victorian art and that of the Edwardian

⁴ *Press*, 11 June 1910, 8-11. *The Times*, 9 February 1910, 9.

⁵ 'The New Gallery,' *Burlington Magazine*.

⁶ *Athenaeum*, 22 January 1910, 106; *Studio* Vol. 203 (February 1910): 33-34; *Press*, 11 June 1910, 9.

⁷ D.S. MacColl, *Saturday Review*, 16 January 1904.

era, nor divided between 'high' and 'low' art. In the same way that I have argued to position the New Gallery as a space of convergence between east and west in its location on Regent Street, it can also be perceived as a place where art from different eras, and created in a variety of media, united to reveal the multi-layered, multi-faceted developments of the time.

The history of the New Gallery became absorbed into a larger narrative of the nineteenth-century London art market which is typically charted from the rise of smaller dealers and print shops such as the Goupil Gallery, to the story of the Grosvenor Gallery between 1877 and 1890, and then advancing rapidly to 1910 with the exhibition of *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* at the Grafton. The temptation to divide the art world into Victorian and Edwardian, and particularly to neglect the final few years of the nineteenth century and first few of the twentieth, is one which is gradually being challenged by scholars and one which is challenged in this thesis. With so many of the great Victorian artists dying within a few years of the end of the century (for example William Morris, Frederic Leighton and John Everett Millais in 1896, Burne-Jones in 1898), and Queen Victoria's death in 1901, the divide is partly stimulated by the losses that these figures presented. However, the New Gallery operated across the two eras, with artists such as Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Evelyn de Morgan, Edward Walton and Charles Ricketts, and societies such as the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, exhibiting at the venue throughout both centuries. The New Gallery provides a missing link in the history of art exhibitions; as a microcosm of the artistic and cultural environments of London at this time, its activities encapsulated the endeavours of artists and societies, the methods of exhibiting and writing about art, and visitor response to specific artworks and exhibitions as a whole.

Particular elements of exhibition design and display which cemented the New Gallery's reputation in the late nineteenth century are recognisable in exhibitions of the present day. Although it cannot necessarily be claimed that the New Gallery devised these elements, I do want to argue that it was within this space that we have some of the earliest examples of presenting mixed media, performance, pedagogical frameworks, and changes in display aesthetics. The New Gallery summer exhibitions, and those

organised by the International Society and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, presented a wide-range of different media within a single show. Although the Gallery's earlier summer exhibitions maintained the tradition of selecting only painting, sculpture and drawing, the gradual inclusion of additional art forms began in 1900 when major alterations took place in the Central Hall. The space was filled not only with sculpture but also with a sizeable collection of miniatures, medals and plaquettes, jewellery and enamels. The integration of jewellery, enamels and metalwork became increasingly important in the summer exhibitions and reflected Hallé and Comyns Carr's particular interest and support of the work of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.⁸ By 1908 the Balcony contained a specific area dedicated to 'Handicrafts and Applied Arts,' which included numerous cases with multiple decorative items and a substantial amount of jewellery.

At the Royal Academy, the content of summer exhibitions remained restricted to the conventional trio of painting, sculpture and drawings until well into the twentieth century.⁹ In 1980, for example, the catalogue reveals that the exhibits were limited to the aforementioned categories, although by the year 2000 a number of individual artworks on display incorporated mixed media, while decorative work was also included. The Royal Academy claim now to showcase 'a variety of work in all media, including painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, architecture and film'.¹⁰ A mix of media is more easily achievable within a thematic exhibition, such as *The Red that Colored the World*, which presented a wide range of artwork from Renaissance paintings and triptychs, to contemporary costume and jewellery, tapestries and three-dimensional pieces.¹¹ The combination of 'high' and 'decorative' art were brought together at this exhibition to explore the cultural, political and social associations of the colour red. Accepted these days as a relatively standard model, when the New Gallery promoted handicrafts and photography as high art, and encouraged the mix of

⁸ See Chapter Two.

⁹ Occasional architectural models were included, such as that for the new Coal Exchange in 1847.

¹⁰ 'About the Summer Exhibition,' accessed 11 October 2023, <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/summer-exhibition>.

¹¹ *A Red that Colored the World*, Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, 17 May – 13 September 2015, accessed 2 October 2023, <https://www.internationalfolkart.org/exhibition/2433/the-red-that-colored-the-world>.

media at exhibitions, they took a radical, ambitious step which was perceived at the time as comparatively risky, but reflected their commitment to original and ground-breaking art.

From the first Arts and Crafts exhibition at the New Gallery the committee included practical demonstrations at their series of highly regarded evening lectures. These incorporated a variety of visual material including lantern slides, blackboard sketching, decorative objects and examples of the tools required for each specified craft. In a later development, Arnold Dolmetsch and his daughter held performances on the harpsichord in the West Room, illustrating the tone and quality of the instrument, while also providing an additional way of capturing the audience's attention.¹² The New Gallery quickly discovered that, by including elements of performance, an exhibition might appeal to a wider section of the public. This approach remains popular today and has expanded to include video, live music, immersive encounters and a high level of interaction between art work and viewer. The recent *Opera: Passion, Power and Politics* at the Victoria and Albert Museum was a fully immersive experience where visitors were supplied with headsets to accompany them on the route.¹³ Covering four hundred years of opera, the exhibits included drawings and paintings, model opera sets, film and video footage, costumes, and a range of three-dimensional objects connected to the theme. The exhibition was the first in the newly-opened Sainsbury Gallery and contributed significantly to a record year for the Victoria and Albert Museum in attracting over four million visitors for the first time.¹⁴

The historical exhibitions at the New Gallery (particularly the Tudor and Stuart), with their strong pedagogical remit, encouraged high visitor numbers and proved to be extremely profitable. Themed historical shows remain hugely popular today, providing a continuing redefinition of the past, as well as a way of legitimising new opinions

¹² See Chapter Two.

¹³ *Opera: Passion, Power and Politics*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 30 September 2017 to 25 February 2018.

¹⁴ Victoria and Albert Museum, Annual Report and Accounts, accessed 17 October 2023, <https://vanda-production-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/2018/07/18/10/54/31/2e78a797-70aa-4a6d-a6c4-db71a4ffa8b0/VAAR%20-%20final%20web%20version%2018%2007%202018.pdf>.

through catalogues, essays and conferences. The people, politics and culture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in particular, have been re-presented regularly over the last sixty years, often seeking to challenge dominant assumptions about these times. Exhibitions in the twentieth century were more inclined to focus purely on paintings, such as *The Elizabethan Image: Painting 1540-1620* in 1969 and *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, but more recent exhibitions incorporate a wide range of objects of different media, for example *The Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England*, held in New York.¹⁵ Here the curators amassed a wide range of objects in different media to more fully explore the culture of this period in a way that was reminiscent of the Tudor exhibition at the New Gallery nearly 150 years ago.

The New Gallery's interior aesthetics transformed gradually over twenty-two years, linking earlier aspects of visual display to developments from the mid-twentieth century onwards. With red walls, plants in the Central Court and comfortable leather sofas dotted throughout the rooms, the Gallery initially retained a traditional nineteenth-century appearance. However, a change in wall colour signified a fresh approach to exhibition display which particularly suited mixed media, photography, and smaller paintings and drawings. Of particular significance was the work of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society and the International Society, as noted in Chapters Two and Five, both of whom adopted white or neutral backdrops, either attaching fabric to the walls or positioning white screens within the rooms.

There has been little research on the origins of the use of white in art galleries and museums although Bruce Altshuler argues that:

the adoption of the white cube as an international standard for the display of modern and contemporary art can be credited largely to the exhibitions

¹⁵ *The Elizabethan Image: Painting 1540-1620*, Tate, 28 November 1969-8 February 1970; *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, Tate, 12 October 1995-7 January 1996; *Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 10 October 2022-8 January 2023.

mounted during the 1930s at the Museum of Modern Art in New York by founding director Alfred H. Barr.¹⁶

However, as suggested in Chapter One, the use of white in domestic interiors was fashioned by James McNeill Whistler and Edward Godwin in the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, in the new Glasgow School of Art designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh in 1896, the Director's room and those used by other teaching staff, were painted completely white. Both Whistler and the Glasgow Boys group of artists had connections to the New Gallery through the Arts and Crafts and International Societies, and their awareness of, and interest in, the use of white as a more appropriate backdrop to art works must have encouraged consideration of the major change in display. At the very least, it places the New Gallery at the heart of new developments in the exhibition world.

The acknowledged success of the New Gallery as an exhibition venue, its commitment to innovative art and the ambitious and wide-ranging winter exhibitions all raise the question of why the gallery ceased to operate in 1910. Hallé and Comyns Carr retired from their roles in 1909 and hoped to leave the gallery operating successfully without them. The two had started work in the art world together in 1877, as young men of thirty-one and twenty-eight respectively, when employed by Sir Coutts Lindsay at the Grosvenor Gallery in Bond Street; by the time they quit the New Gallery, Hallé was sixty-four and Comyns Carr sixty-one. After thirty-two years in the business, both men were ready to relinquish the responsibilities involved in running the summer exhibitions and renting out the gallery spaces to repay the lease. It should be remembered, as well, that Hallé was a professional artist showing his work at the New Gallery and elsewhere, while Comyns Carr continued to be active as a playwright and art critic. Alice Comyns Carr describes the stress of visiting artists' studios in order to select works for the summer exhibitions as becoming 'something of a penance' to the two Directors in their final years at the gallery.¹⁷ She explains that the task of rejecting a work for the gallery's summer exhibition 'taxed the patience of both directors,' as did

¹⁶ Bruce Altshuler, *Salon to Biennial: Exhibitions that made Art History* (London: Phaidon, 2008), 17.

¹⁷ Alice Comyns Carr, *J. Comyns Carr: Stray Memories by his Wife* (London: MacMillan, 1920), 80.

dealing with artists' complaints about the position of their painting, sculpture or drawing within the spaces.¹⁸ The 'strenuous work preced[ing] the days of the Private Views' became harder as the two men became older.¹⁹

Their planned strategy for the continuance of the Gallery was that 'the summer exhibitions [would] for the next five years be conducted by the artist exhibitors themselves.'²⁰ Hallé and Comyns Carr facilitated the formation of an artists' society with subscribers and it was this group which organised the Twenty-Second Summer Exhibition of 1909. The catalogue for 1909 lists a total of one hundred and seventeen artist subscribers to the society, comprising seventy-two painters (including Hallé, Edward Walton, Evelyn de Morgan, Henri Rivière, Charles Shannon, J.J. Shannon, John Lavery, Sir James Guthrie and Annie Swynnerton), nine sculptors, twenty-six draughtsmen and handicraft workers, and ten miniaturists. The exhibition was not a financial success and despite the fact that the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, the International, the Society of Portrait Painters and the Royal Photographic Society requested the premises for their annual exhibitions, the Gallery was not commercially viable without the summer exhibitions with thousands of visitors paying entry, buying catalogues or purchasing art works. The commercial pressures which had forced the closure of the Grosvenor Gallery in 1890 resurfaced to claim the demise of the New Gallery thirty years later, with the loss of its two formidable Directors a major contributing factor.

The New Gallery formed one layer in the history of 121 Regent Street. As proposed in the Introduction, the gallery offered a meeting point between the social and cultural environs of Soho and Mayfair which aptly suited the eclectic mix of art displayed within its spaces: high art, industrial and craft work, and photography. The site continued to draw together the vicissitudes of east and west each time it was remodelled and refunctioned, with the previous layers of history accumulating to permeate the narrative of the newly-operating space.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Carr, *Stray Memories*, 81.

²⁰ C.E. Halle, *Notes from a Painter's Life* (London: J. Murray, 1909), 240.

In 1910 the New Gallery Restaurant and Wiener Café opened, but was a short-lived venture despite advertising unsurpassed Austrian and Hungarian cuisine, reading rooms with all the latest newspapers and the opportunity to listen to Herr Gottlieb's celebrated orchestra.²¹ The New Gallery name, however, was preserved during this period. The tradition of incorporating the name continued when, in 1913, the site re-opened as the New Gallery Kinema (later Cinema) under the ownership of Provincial Cinematograph Theatres, and proved to be a popular meeting place and one which showed prestigious productions. The site remained a cinema until 1952, later under the ownership of the Rank Organisation. In advertisements the venue is simply described as the New Gallery, without mention of a cinema.²² From 1953 to 1992, the Seventh Day Adventist Church occupied the premises, offering a community service and spiritual salvation, again retaining the name of the New Gallery.²³ The site was empty until 2006 when it was transformed into a retail headquarters, firstly by Habitat and subsequently by Burberry as their flagship store. Today, visitors to the site arrive from all over world, approaching from north, south, east and west.

The New Gallery was an active, progressive exhibition space, overseen by two experienced Directors whose reputation contributed to the success of the Gallery. The multi-layered site at 121 Regent Street, with its rich history both before and after the turn of the century, provided a flexibility and capaciousness not previously seen in London's West End. This meant that a wide variety of artworks, societies and groups could exhibit in the venue in their own distinct ways, no matter what the size, shape or medium of the work. Each exhibition transformed the interiors, creating new meanings within the spaces, which in turn resonated with wider cultural and social issues. This thesis brings together the space and select exhibitions to demonstrate the significance of the previously overlooked New Gallery as a major exhibition venue spanning the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Despite closing in 1910, the name of the New Gallery

²¹ See, for example, the advertisement in *Referee*, June 26, 1910.

²² Examples include 'The Cinema: The Londoners (New Gallery)', *Country Life* Vol. 85, no. 2202 (1 April 1939): 333; 'The New New Gallery,' *Kinematograph Weekly* Vol. 100, no.947 (11 June 1925): 67-68.

²³ The Church named their headquarters the *New Gallery Centre*. See <https://centrallondonchurch.org/about-us/>, accessed 5 September 2023.

continued to be used by later owners of the site. Even today Number Six Vigo Street retains the name New Gallery House, demonstrating that the trace of this layer of the palimpsest remains embedded in the site 135 years after the founding of the New Gallery. (Figure 178)

Appendix One: List of Exhibitions by Organiser

Directors of New Gallery (with committee): 37

Summer Exhibitions of the work of living artists:

1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901,
1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908

Winter Exhibitions:

Royal House of Stuart 1888/9

Royal House of Tudor 1890

Royal House of Guelph 1891

Victorian Art 1891/2

The works of Edward Burne-Jones 1892/3

Early Italian Art 1894

Venetian Art 1895

Spanish Art 1895/6

The works of G.F. Watts 1897

British & Continental Art 1897/8

Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition 1898/9

Flemish & British Art 1899/1900

Exhibition of W.B. Richmond 1900/01

Monarchs of Britain & Ireland 1902

Autumn Exhibitions:

1892

1898

Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society: 8

1888. 1889. 1890, 1893, 1896, 1899, 1903, 1910

Society of Portrait Painters: 12

1894, 1895, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909

Eastman Kodak Company: 1

1897

Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain: 10

1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909

International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers: 9

1904 annual exhibition, 1905 annual exhibition, 1905 Memorial to J.M. Whistler, 1906 annual exhibition, 1907 annual exhibition, 1908 annual exhibition, 1908 Exhibition of Fair Women, 1909 annual exhibition, 1909 Exhibition of Fair Women

Summer Exhibition Committee: 1

1909

**Appendix Two: List of Exhibitions held at the New Gallery 1888 – 1910
with links to digital catalogues where available.**

1. 9 May – July 1888: First Summer Exhibition.
<https://archive.org/details/newgallery00blacgoog/page/n3/mode/2up>
2. 4 October – 15 December 1888: First Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib01AAD19801797>
3. 31 December 1888 – March/April 1889: Exhibition of the Royal House of Stuart.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofroy00newg/page/n3/mode/2up>
4. 2 May – July 1889: Second Summer Exhibition.
<https://archive.org/details/newgallery00blacgoog/page/n81/mode/2up>
5. 7 October – December 1889: Second Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib02AAD19801798>
6. 1 January – April 1890: Exhibition of the Royal House of Tudor.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofroya00newgiala/page/2/mode/2up>
7. 1 May – July 1890: Third Summer Exhibition.
<https://archive.org/details/newgallery00blacgoog/page/n145/mode/2up>
8. 6 October – December 1890: Third Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib03AAD1980175Rev>
9. 1 January – 4 April 1891: Exhibition of the Royal House of Guelph.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitroyalhous00newgiala>
10. 29 April – July 1891: Fourth Summer Exhibition.
<https://archive.org/details/newgallery00blacgoog/page/n229/mode/2up>

11. 1 December 1891 – March 1892: Exhibition of Victorian Art.
<https://archive.org/details/victorianexhibit00newg>

12. 25 April – July 1892: Fifth Summer Exhibition.
<https://archive.org/details/newgallery00blacgoog/page/n311/mode/2up>

13. 3 October – November 1892: Autumn Exhibition of Pictures, Sculpture and Design by Living Artists.
Tate Library.

14. 31 December 1892 – April 1893: Retrospective of Edward Burne-Jones.
Tate Library.

15. 1 May – July 1893: Sixth Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.

16. 2 October – November 1893: Fourth Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib04AAD1980176>

17. 1 January – March 1894: Exhibition of Early Italian Art from 1300-1500.
<https://archive.org/details/ExhibitionItalian>

18. 30 April – July 1894: Seventh Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.

19. 18 October – November 1894: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

20. 1 January – March 1895: Exhibition of Venetian Art.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofvene00unse/page/n133/mode/2up>

21. 29 April – July 1895: Eighth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

22. 14 October – November 1895: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.
23. 30 December 1895 – March 1896: Exhibition of Spanish Art.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofspan00newg>
24. 27 April – July 1896: Ninth Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.
25. October – December 1896: Fifth Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib05AAD1980182>
26. 1 January – March 1897: Retrospective Exhibition of the work of George Frederic Watts.
Courtauld Library.
27. May – July 1897: Tenth Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.
28. 27 October – 16 November 1897: Eastman Kodak Exhibition.
<https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Kodak-exhibition-1897.pdf>
29. December 1897 – March 1898: Exhibition of British and Continental Schools, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofpict00ross>
30. May – July 1898: Eleventh Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.
31. October 1898: Autumn Exhibition by living artists of the French School, plus a collection of prints and objects exhibited by Signor Bordoni of Florence.
Tate Library.
32. December 1898 – March 1899: Edward Burne-Jones Memorial Exhibition.
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofwork00newgiala>

33. May – July 1899: Twelfth Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.

34. October – 7 December 1899: Sixth Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib06AAD19801805>

35. [December 1899 – March 1900: Exhibition of Flemish and British Art including the art of Paul Rubens.](https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofpict00newg)
<https://archive.org/details/exhibitionofpict00newg>

36. May – July 1900: Thirteenth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

37. 10 October – 3 November 1900: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1900

38. 20 November – December 1900: Society of Portrait Painters & Miniature painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

39. December 1900- March 1901: Exhibition of the works of W.B. Richmond
Tate Library.

40. May – July 1901: Fourteenth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

41. 30 September – 2 November 1901: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1901

42. November – December 1901: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

43. January – March 1902: Monarchs of Great Britain and Ireland.
<https://archive.org/details/monarchsofgreatb00newg>

44. May – July 1902: Fifteenth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

45. 29 September – 4 November 1902: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1902

46. November – December 1902: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

47. January – March 1903: Seventh Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.
<https://archive.org/details/ACESExhib07AAD1980199>

48. May – July 1903: Sixteenth Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.

49. 24 September – 31 October 1903: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1903

50. November – December 1903: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

51. January – March 1904: International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers.
Tate Library.

52. May – July 1904: Seventeenth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

53. 22 September – 29 October 1904: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1904

54. November – December 1904: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

55. January – February 1905: International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers.

Tate Library.

56. 22 February – 15 April 1905: Memorial Exhibition of James McNeill Whistler.
<https://archive.org/details/memoralexhibiti00inteiala>

57. May – July 1905: Eighteenth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

58. 21 September – 28 October 1905: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1905

59. November – December 1905: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

60. January – February 1906: International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers.
<https://archive.org/details/IntlSocietyExhibition1906>

61. April – July 1906: Nineteenth Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

62. 20 September – 27 October 1906: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1906

63. November – December 1906: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

64. January – February 1907: International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers.
Tate Library.

65. April – July 1907: Twentieth Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.

66. 19 September – 26 October 1907: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1907

67. November – December 1907: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

68. January – February 1908: International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers.
<https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE4880144&file=FL19028776&mode=browse>

69. February – March 1908: Exhibition of Fair Women.
Tate Library.

70. May – July 1908: Twenty-first Summer Exhibition.
Courtauld Library.

71. 23 September – 30 October 1908: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1908

72. November – December 1908: Society of Portrait Painters & Royal School of Needlework.
London Metropolitan Archives.

73. January – February 1909: International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers.
Tate Library.

74. February – March 1909: Exhibition of Fair Women.
Tate Library.

75. May – July 1909: Twenty-second Summer Exhibition.
Tate Library.

76. 23 September – 30 October 1909: Royal Photographic Society.
http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibition_details.php?enid=1909

77. November – December 1909: Society of Portrait Painters.
London Metropolitan Archives.

78. January – March 1910: Ninth Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.

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Country Life

Daily News

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Ecclesiologist

Fortnightly Review

Girls' Own Paper

Graphic

Hampshire & Portsmouth Telegraph

Illustrated London News

Journal of Decorative Arts Society

Journal of the Royal Institute for British Architects

Keyboard Perspectives

Kinematograph Weekly

Lady

Lloyds Weekly

Manchester Courier & Lancashire General Advertiser

Manchester Guardian

Magazine of Art
Morning Post
Musical Standard
Murray's Magazine
Observer
Pall Mall Gazette
Parthenon
Penny Illustrated
Press
Royal Photographic Society Journal
Saturday Night
Saturday Review
Sheffield Daily Telegraph
Speaker
Spectator
Standard
Star
Studio
Telegraph
The Times
Westminster Gazette
World
Yearbook of Photography & Photographic News

Illustrations



FIGURE 1: THOMAS ROWLANDSON AND AUGUSTUS CHARLES PUGIN, *EXHIBITION ROOM, SOMERSET HOUSE*, 1808. AQUATINT AND ETCHING, 19.4 x 25.9CM. ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, LONDON.



FIGURE 2: JOSEPH PARKING MAYALL, *GEORGE FREDERIC WATTS R.A.*, c.1884. PHOTOGRAVURE, 16.5 X 21.8CM. ROYAL ACADEMY.



FIGURE 3: JOHN TALLIS, *LONDON STREET VIEWS, 1838-1840*. LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, 2002 [1847].

The arrow marks the location of 121 Regent Street at the time when it was Newman's Yard.



FIGURE 4: PEDRO NÚÑEZ DEL VALLE, *Jael and Sisera*, 1620s. OIL ON CANVAS, 124 x 134CM. NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND.



FIGURE 5: FRANCOIS CLOUET, *MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS*, c. 1558. WATERCOLOUR ON VELLUM, 8.3 X 5.7CM. ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST.

The painting was reproduced for the front cover of the catalogue for the Exhibition of the Royal House of Stuart, New Gallery, 1889.

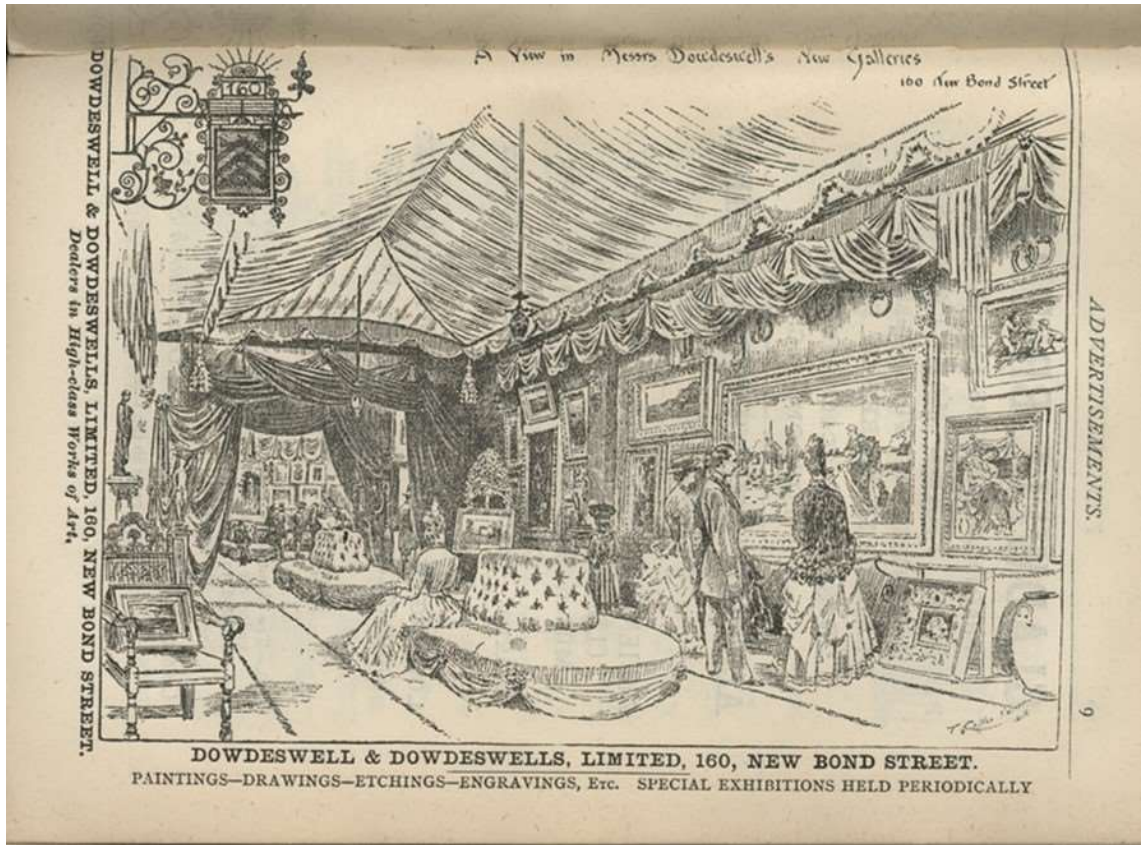


FIGURE 6: *DOWDESWELL & DOWDESWELLS LIMITED*. ADVERTISEMENT, *THE YEAR'S ART*, 1892, 13.

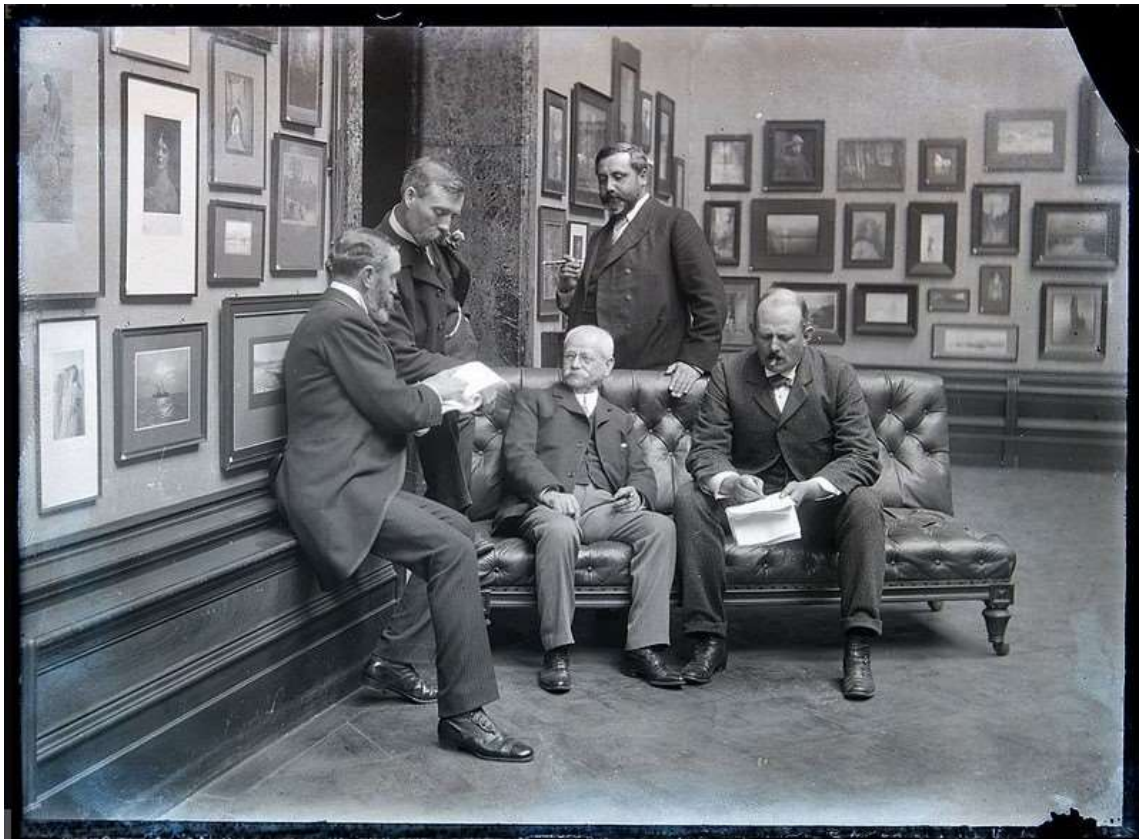


FIGURE 7: JUDGING PANEL FOR THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY EXHIBITION, NEW GALLERY, 1902.

From left to right, standing: William Crooke, William Bland, J.C.S. Mummery. From left to right on sofa: Joseph Gale, Peter Emerson. Available in the public domain.

THE NEW GALLERY.



Harry Furniss
HERE'S the New Gallery, marble-ous! golden! Architect Rosson, to whom we're beholden. Every arrangement made in the New Gallery is in a style we'll call Carr-ish and Hallery

THE FIRST PLUNGE

Rooms rather low, and suggestive of heat. But the vestibule offers a shady retreat: 'Tis called an "impiscarium"—just what you'd wish [and fish]. On a very hot day, with tank, fountain, So useful for morning, with brushes and sponge. And here comes the Infant to make its first plunge, Carr-ied by HALLÉ and CARR. If you look, The picture's one-hundred-and-seven in book, KENNEDY's subject. We hope the ablution Will suit the new Infant's untried constitution. If he boldly strikes out, we foretell, and with reason,

He must get on swimmingly all through the season. [chairs,— Here plays a fountain, and here there are Why not a band, hid away, playing airs? 'Tis just the place for a lounge in July. Where you can rest with some green in your eye, [think Which there will be, if you sit there and That a waiter will bring cigarettes and cool drink. [JONAS. TADENA, HENKONER, FORD, and BURNE— All the Committee, in various sones, May to the Middlesex Magistrates go For leave and for licence,—the answer is "No." At last they must yield—then Refreshment! Cigar! [CARR. We'll do it in style with our Triumphal

FIGURE 8: HARRY FURNISS, *THE NEW GALLERY*, 1888. WOOD ENGRAVING REPRODUCED IN *PUNCH*, 19 MAY 1888.

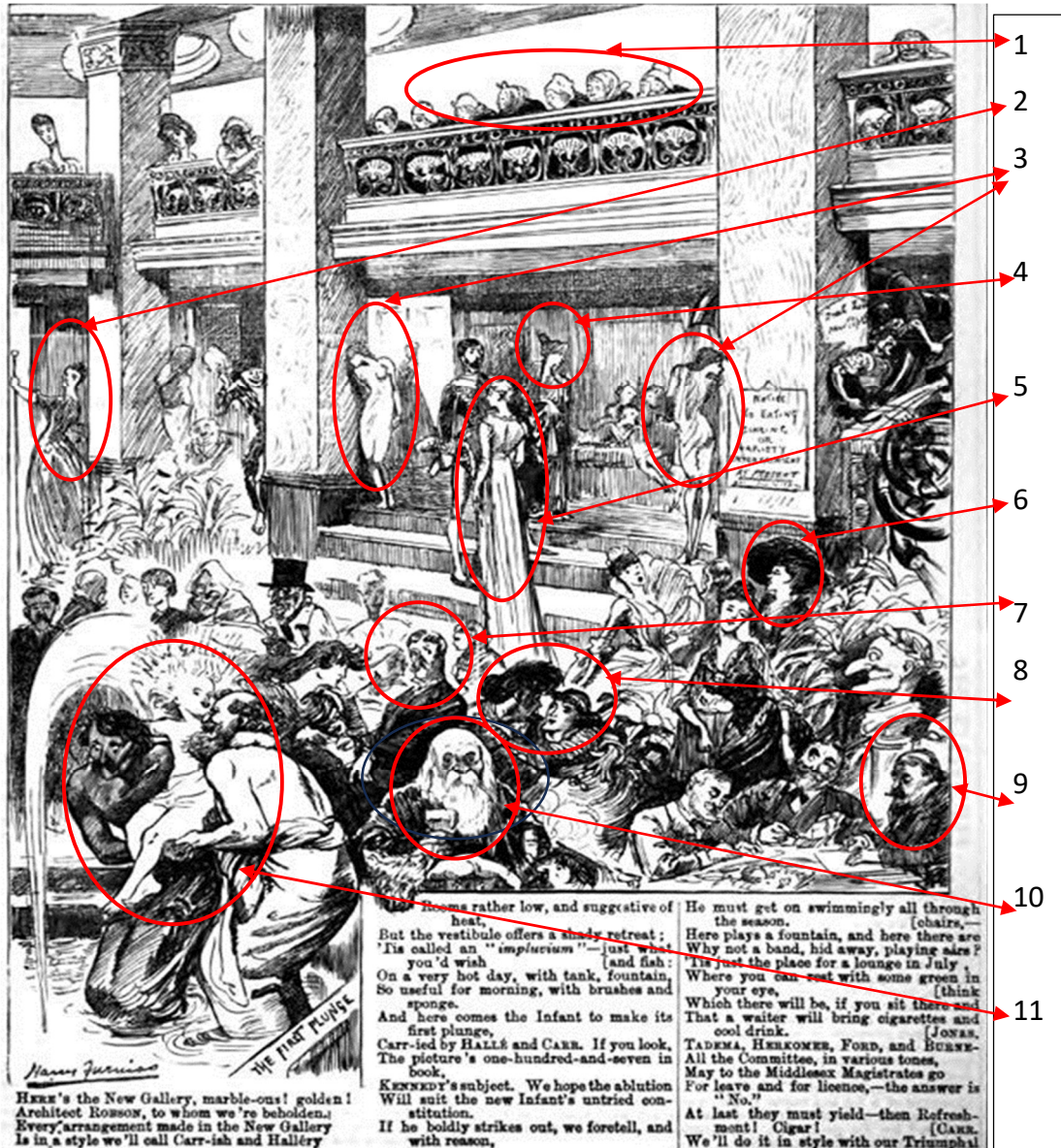


FIGURE 9: ANNOTATED VERSION OF FIGURE 8.

1. Alphonse Legros, *Femmes en Prière*
2. J.D. Linton, *Portrait of Miss Wardour*
3. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Rock of Doom & The Doom Fulfilled*
4. H. Schmalz, *Zenobia's last look on Palmyra*
5. John Collier, *Portrait of Miss Ethel Huxley*
6. John Everett Millais, *The Last Rose of Summer*
7. Frank Holl, *Portrait of F. Symons*
8. C.E. Hallé, *Paolo and Francesca*
9. E.A. Ward, *Henry Labouchere*
10. Hubert Herkomer, *My Father and my Children*
11. Charles Napier, *A fair-haired slave who made himself King*

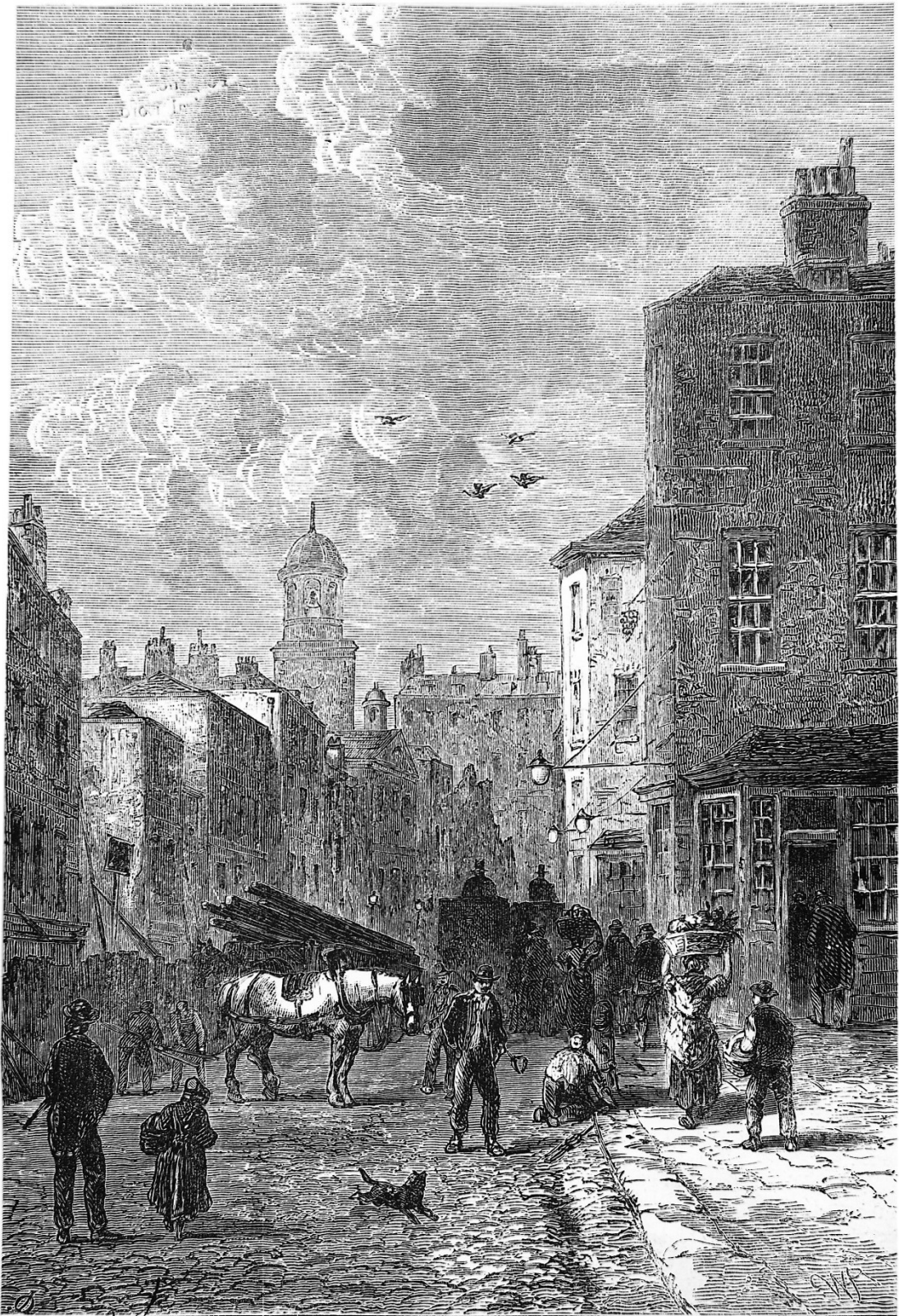


FIGURE 10: CHARLES NAPIER KENNEDY, *A FAIR-HAIRED SLAVE WHO MADE HIMSELF KING*, 1888. OIL ON CANVAS, 214.6 C 142.7CM. MANCHESTER ART GALLERY.



FIGURE 11: BURBERRY STORE, 121 REGENT STREET, SHOWING THE ATRIUM AND BALCONY SURROUND.

Available at <https://www.retail-innovation.com/burberry-regent-street>.



SWALLOW STREET DURING ITS DEMOLITION.

FIGURE 12: *Old Swallow Street during its Demolition*, early nineteenth century. Engraving, no dimensions. Wellcome Collection.



FIGURE 13: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITIONS SOCIETY, CENTRAL HALL, 1896. PHOTOGRAPH. NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



FIGURE 14: *THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO THE EAST END*. ENGRAVING PUBLISHED IN THE *GRAPHIC*, 21 MAY 1887.

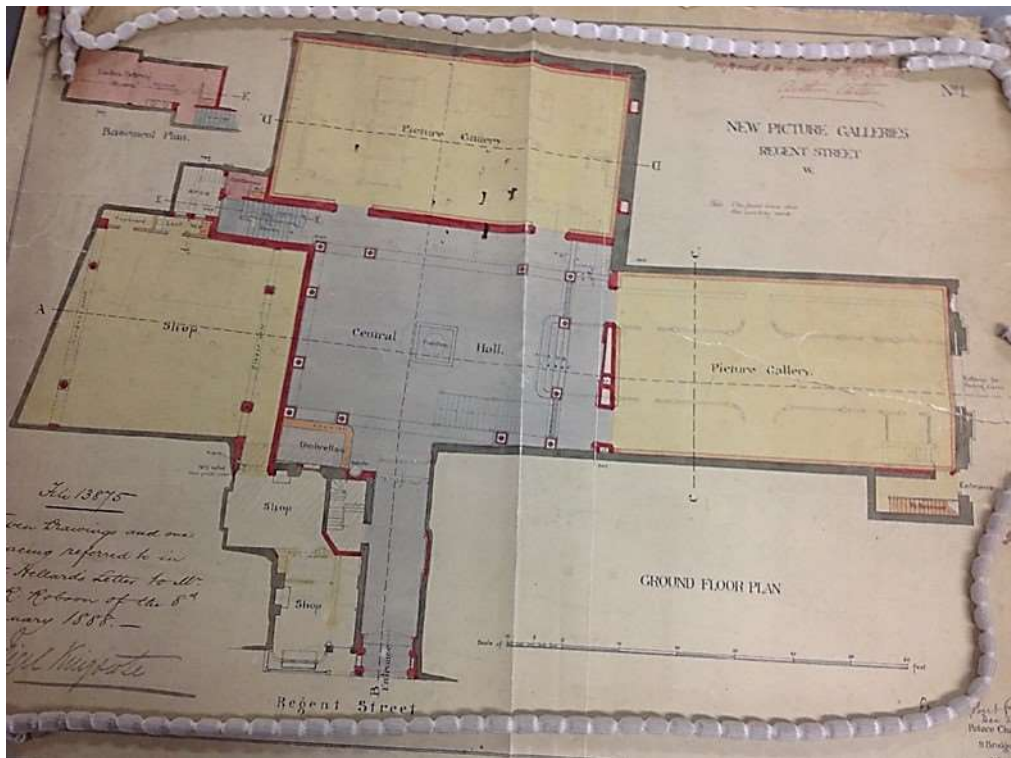


FIGURE 15: EDWARD R. ROBSON, GROUND FLOOR PLAN, NEW GALLERY, 1888. NATIONAL ARCHIVES.

Photograph taken by D. Innes.

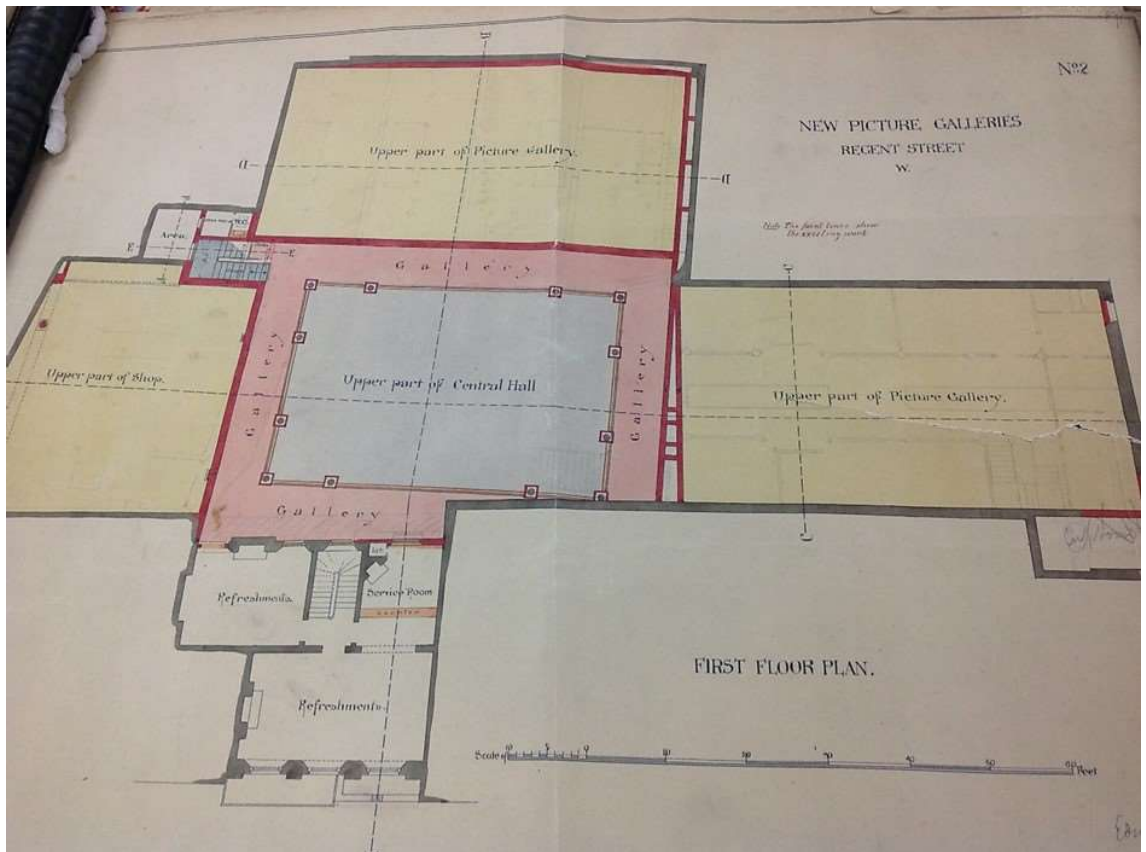


FIGURE 16: EDWARD R. ROBSON, FIRST FLOOR PLAN, NEW GALLERY, 1888. NATIONAL ARCHIVES. Photograph taken by D. Innes.

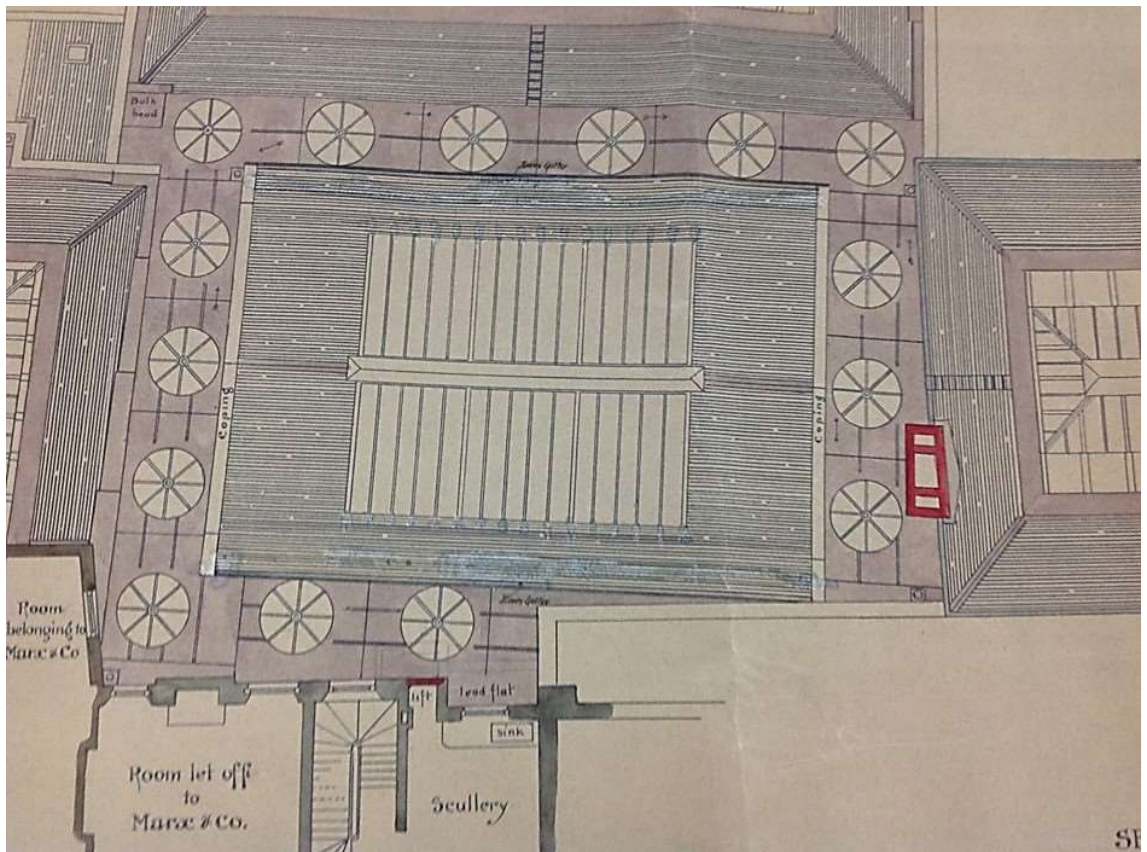


FIGURE 17: EDWARD R. ROBSON, ROOF PLAN, NEW GALLERY, 1888. NATIONAL ARCHIVES.

Photograph taken by D. Innes.

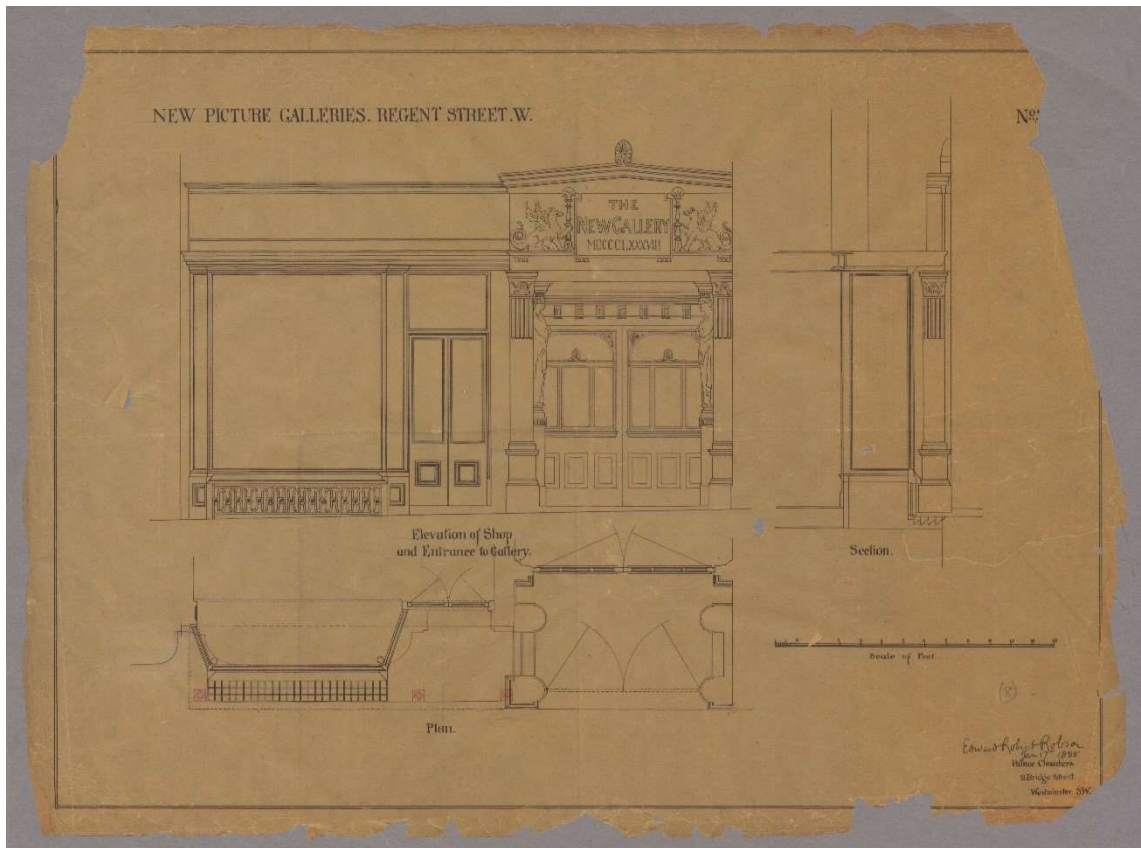


FIGURE 18: EDWARD R. ROBSON, DRAWING OF ENTRANCE PORTICO, NEW GALLERY, 1888.

Image courtesy of National Archives.

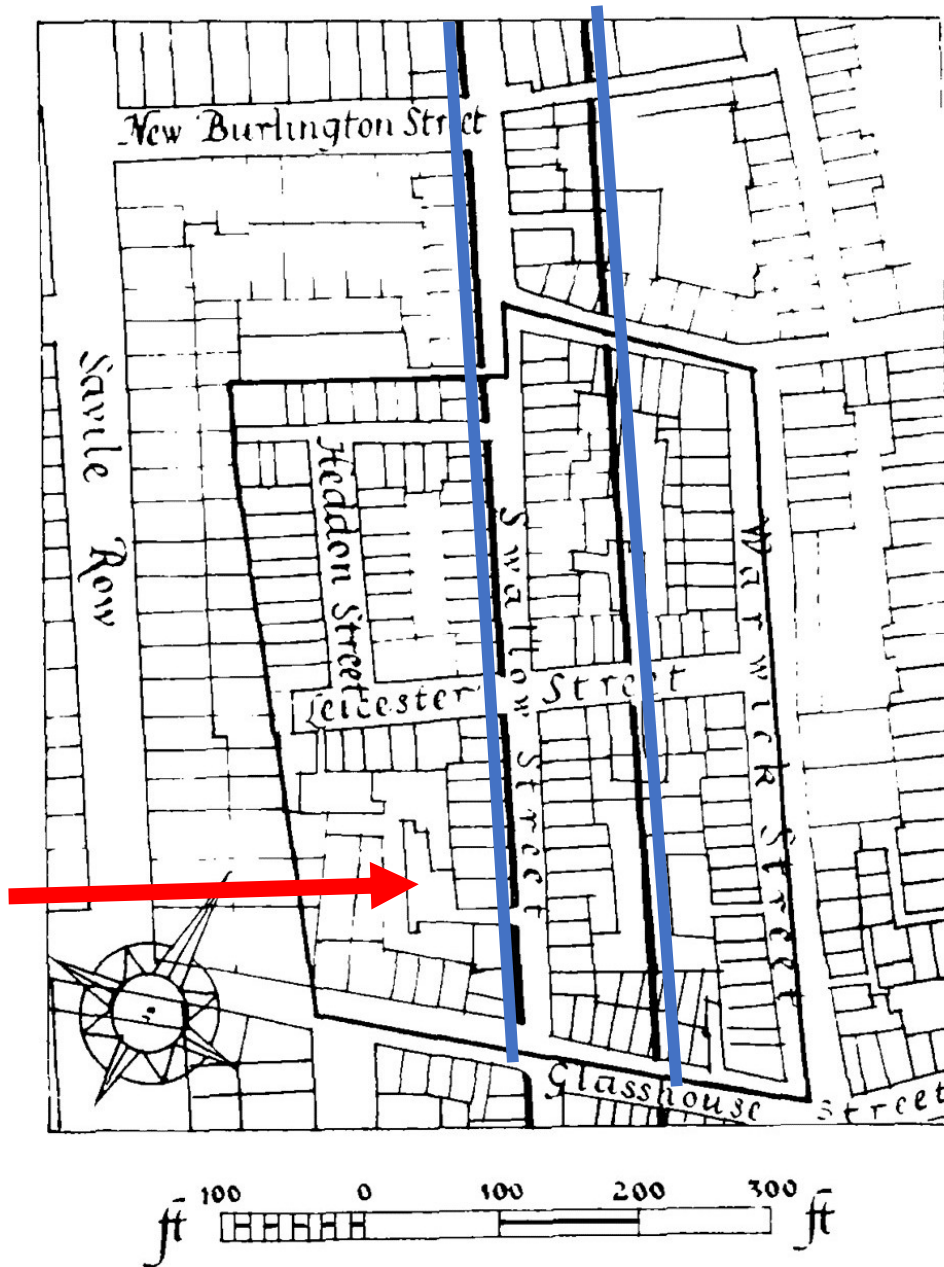


FIGURE 20: DIAGRAM OF MULGAHY CLOSE WITH THE NEW REGENT STREET (OUTLINED IN BLUE) IMPOSED ON TOP OF THE EXISTING SWALLOW STREET.

All the buildings between the blue lines were demolished, including all structures on the east side of Swallow Street. The red arrow indicates the location of the Sadler's Arms Yard which became the site of Newman's Yard. Map available in public domain.

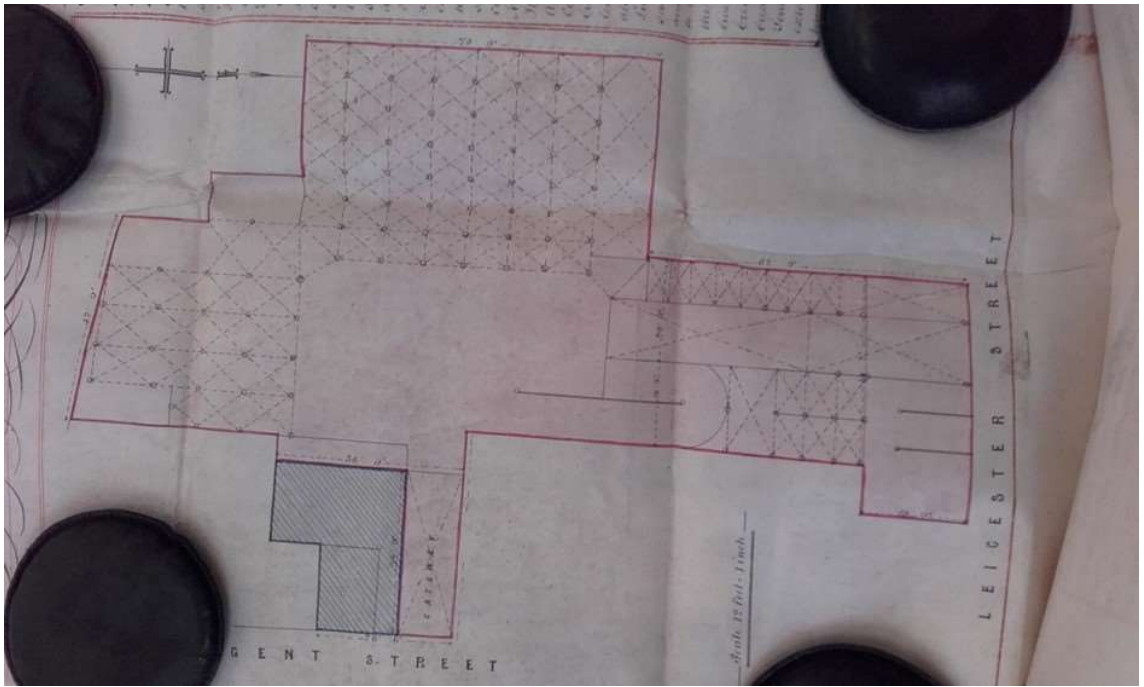


FIGURE 21: GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF 121A REGENT STREET, 1879. WESTMINSTER CITY ARCHIVES.

Taken from the Assignment of Lease from Henry E. Coe to the Army & Navy Provision Market Ltd. Photograph taken by D. Innes.

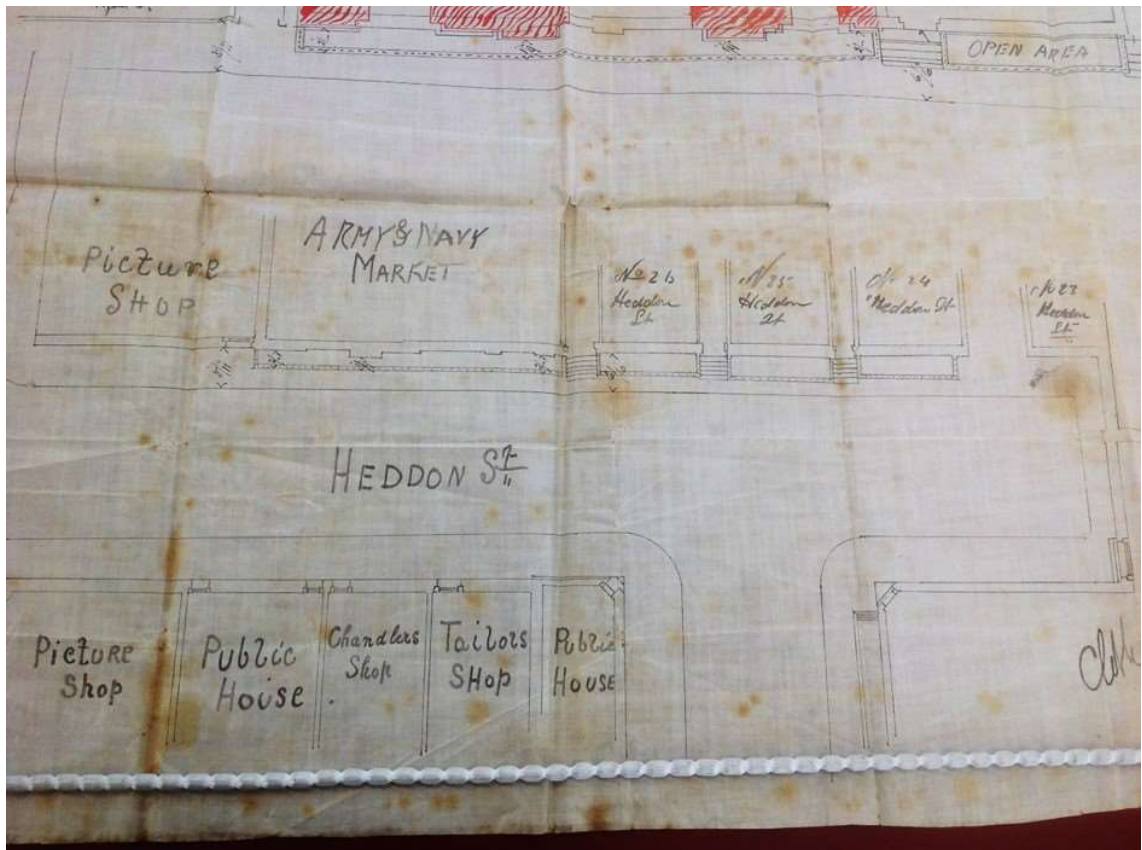


FIGURE 22: BLOCK DESIGN PLAN OF 121 REGENT STREET SHOWING HEDDON STREET ENTRANCE, 1879. WESTMINSTER CITY ARCHIVES.

Taken from Assignment of Lease from Henry E. Coe to the Army & Navy Provision Market Ltd. Photograph taken by D. Innes.



FIGURE 23: *THE OLD MARKET*. PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING 121 REGENT STREET OPERATING AS A PROVISIONS MARKET, 1879-1880.

Boxed set of twelve cabinet photographs taken by Bedford Lemere. Current whereabouts unknown. Available at <https://amdally.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/photographs-of-the-new-gallery-london-1888/>.

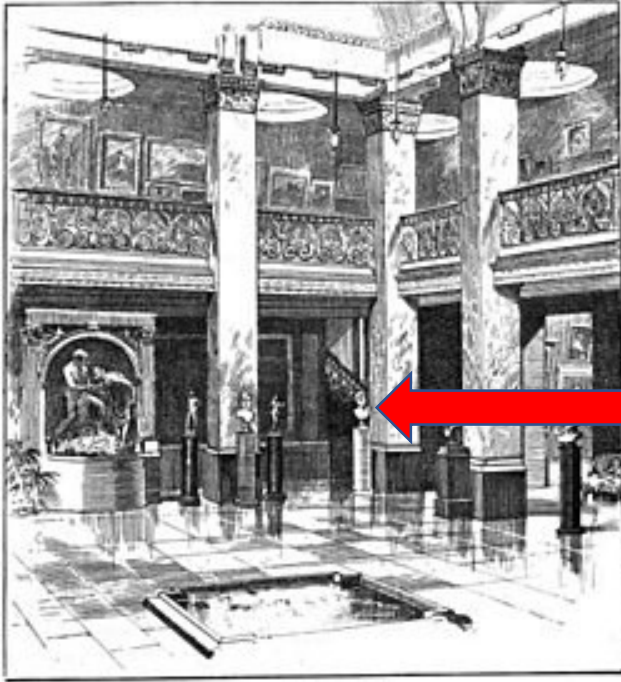


FIGURE 24: CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY, 1888. DRAWING, *NEW GALLERY NOTES* (LONDON: CHATTO & WINDUS, 1888).

The new staircase is just visible in the south-west corner, indicated with a red arrow.



PRIVATE VIEW AT THE NEW GALLERY.

FIGURE 25: *PRIVATE VIEW AT THE NEW GALLERY*. ETCHING, PUBLISHED IN *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER*, 29 JUNE 1889, 616.



FIGURE 26: LAWRENCE ALMA TADEMA, *WATER PETS*, 1874. OIL ON CANVAS, 66 X 142.3CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIGURE 27: FREDERIC LEIGHTON, *BATH OF PSYCHE*, 1890. OIL ON CANVAS, 189.2 X 62.2CM. TATE.



FIGURE 28: CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH. BEDFORD LEMERE COLLECTION, HISTORIC ENGLAND.



FIGURE 29: BALCONY, NEW GALLERY, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH. BEDFORD LEMERE COLLECTION, HISTORIC ENGLAND.

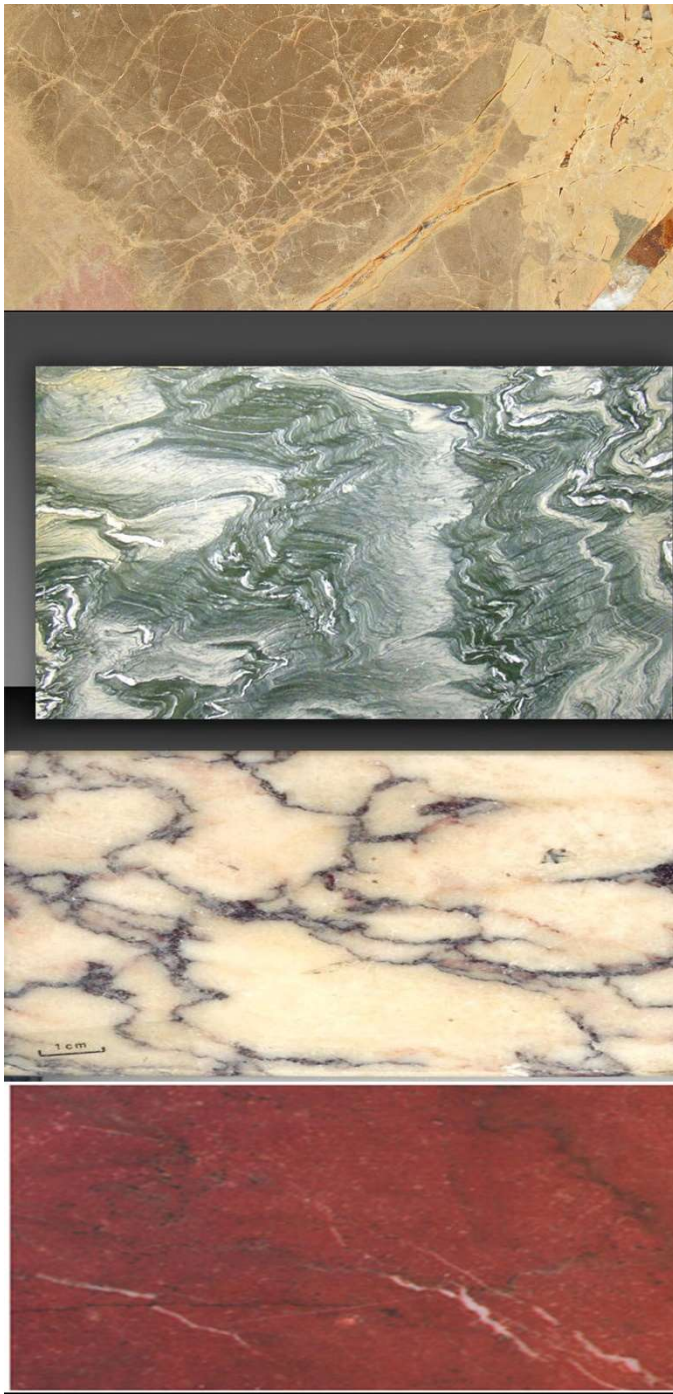


FIGURE 30: MARBLES USED IN THE CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY.

From top: Giallo Antico, Cipollino, Pavonazza, Rosso Antico.

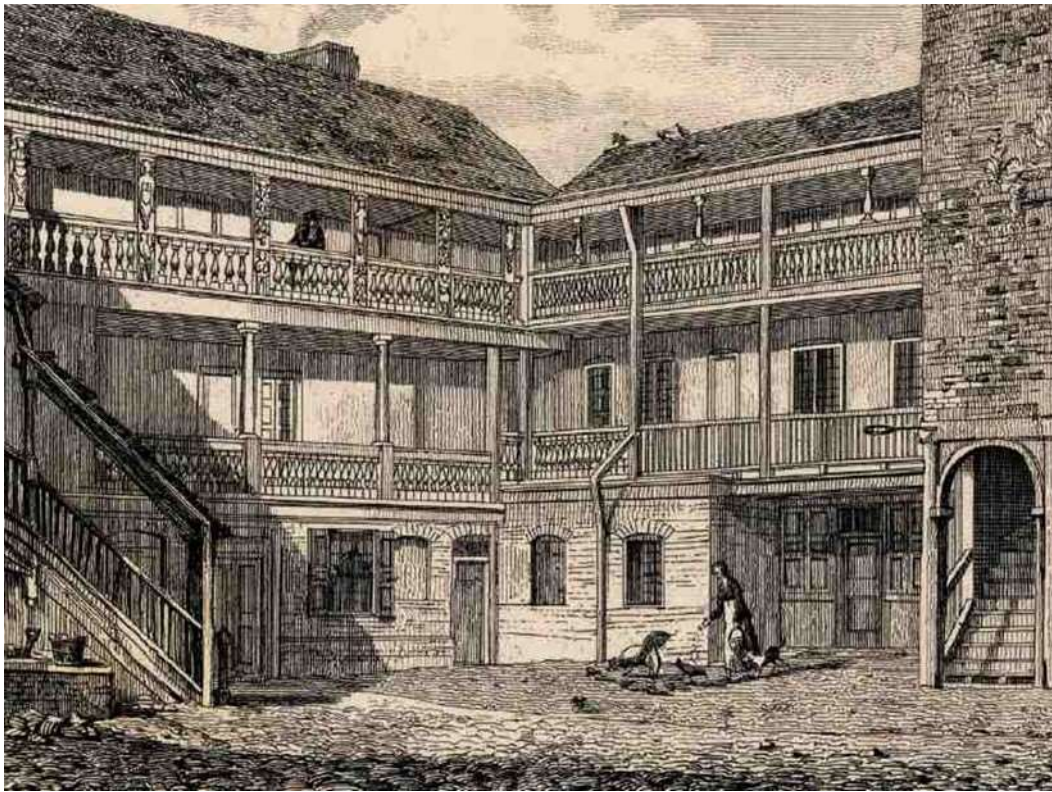


FIGURE 31: THE ANGEL INN, ISLINGTON, 1818. ETCHING.

Available at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol47/pp439-455>.



FIGURE 32: CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH. BEDFORD LEMERE COLLECTION, HISTORIC ENGLAND.



FIGURE 33: WEST ROOM, NEW GALLERY. SUMMER EXHIBITION, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH.

One of a boxed set of twelve cabinet photographs by Bedford Lemere. Current whereabouts unknown.

Available at <https://amdally.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/photographs-of-the-new-gallery-london-1888/>.



FIGURE 34: NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY. SUMMER EXHIBITION, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH.

One of a boxed set of twelve cabinet photographs by Bedford Lemere. Current whereabouts unknown.

Available at <https://amdally.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/photographs-of-the-new-gallery-london-1888/>.



FIGURE 35: NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY. SUMMER EXHIBITION, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH.

One of a boxed set of twelve cabinet photographs by Bedford Lemere. Current whereabouts unknown.

Available at <https://amdally.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/photographs-of-the-new-gallery-london-1888/>.



FIGURE 36: BALCONY, NEW GALLERY. SUMMER EXHIBITION, 1888. PHOTOGRAPH.

One of a boxed set of twelve cabinet photographs by Bedford Lemere. Current whereabouts unknown. Available at <https://amdally.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/photographs-of-the-new-gallery-london-1888/>.



FIGURE 37: CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY. ARTS & CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY EXHIBITION, 1890. PHOTOGRAPH. HISTORIC ENGLAND.

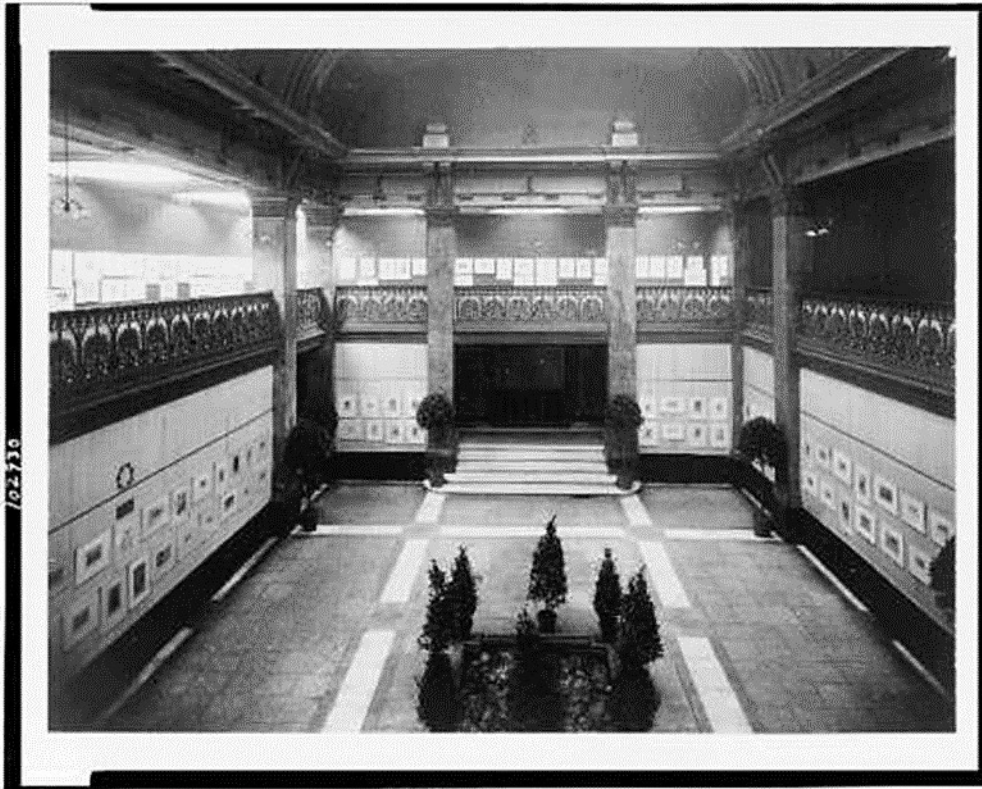


FIGURE 38: CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY DURING WHISTLER MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1905. PHOTOGRAPH. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, WASHINGTON DC.



FIGURE 39: EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY, 1897. PHOTOGRAPH. MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & MEDIA, BRADFORD.

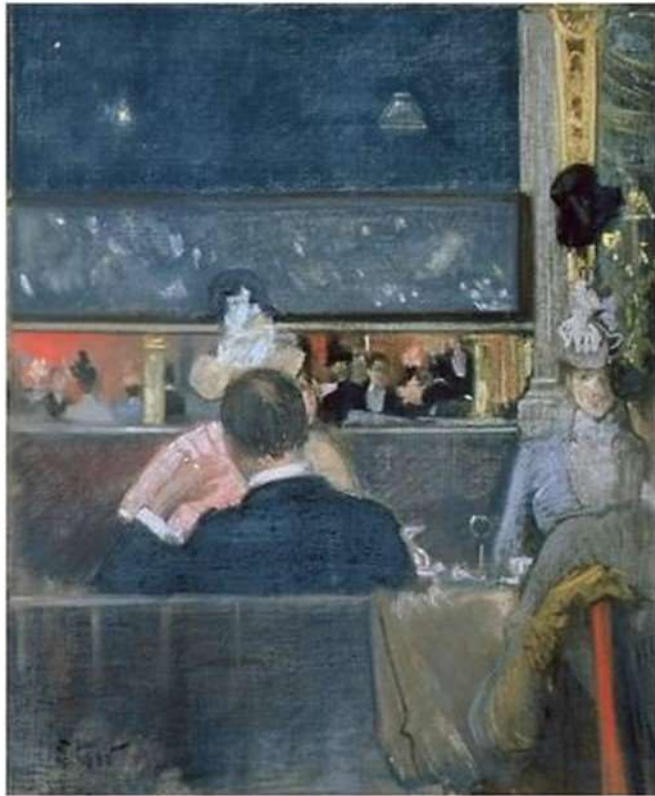


FIGURE 40: SIDNEY STARR, *AT THE CAFÉ ROYAL*, C. 1888. PASTEL ON CANVAS, 61 X 50.8CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

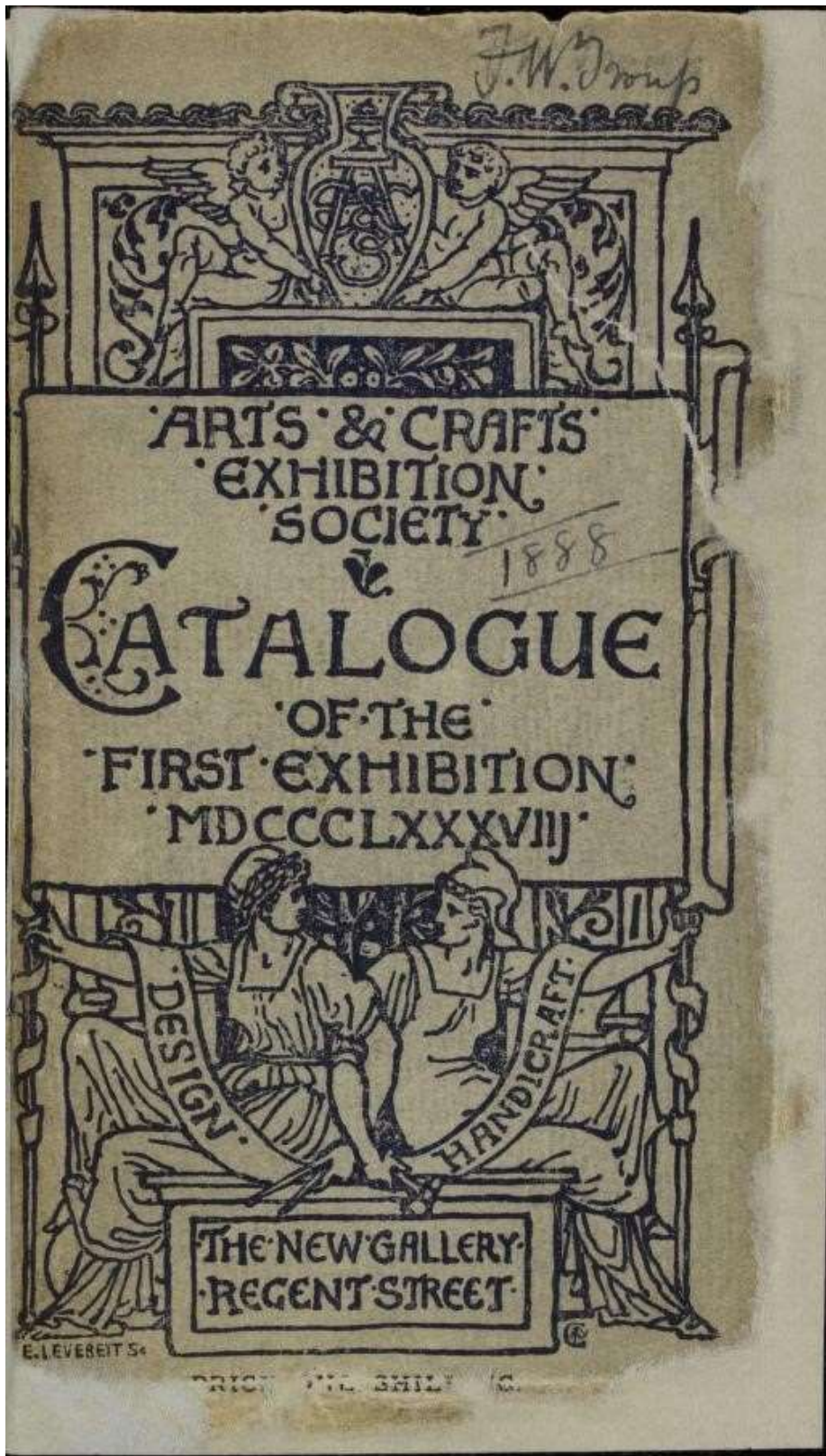


FIGURE 41: FRONTISPIECE, CATALOGUE FOR THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, 1888. SOCIETY OF DESIGNER CRAFTSMEN, ARCHIVE OF ART & DESIGN, VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIGURE 42: R.W. WINFIELD, CONVULVULUS GAS TABLE LAMP, 1848. GILT BRASS AND COLOURED GLASS, 31.5 X 14CM. VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIGURE 43: KATE FAULKNER, DECORATED BROADWOOD GRAND PIANO, 1883. VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.

Photograph: D. Innes.

KATE FAULKNER.
266 a. Grand pianoforte, made by
JOHN BROADWOOD AND SONS, in an
oak case upon a stand.
Decoration in gesso designed and
executed by MISS KATE FAULKNER.
Case maker, J. BANKS.
Cabinet makers, J. WILSON, W.
GILLAM, S. HOLKARD, T. PEGG.
Sound board maker, W. ROBINSON.
Marker-off of scale, T. MEAD.
Key-makers, C. TILLSON, G. WOOL-
STON.
Finisher of action, J. SHEPHERD.
Lent by A. IONIDES, ESQ.

FIGURE 44: CATALOGUE ENTRY FOR KATE FAULKNER'S PIANO. CATALOGUE OF THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, 1888.

Edward Burne-Jones 1833-1898

Grand piano

1883-1885

Burne-Jones based the design on the case and stand of a harpsichord. His piano formed part of the lavish refurbishment of 1 Holland Park commissioned by Alexander Ionides, brother of C.A. Ionides. The house was decorated by Morris & Co., the firm established by William Morris, and became a showpiece of advanced artistic taste.

Oak, stained and decorated with gold and silver gesso

Decorated by Kate Faulkner; manufactured by John Broadwood & Sons

Given by Mrs A.C. Ionides 1927. Museum no. W.23-1927

FIGURE 45: TRANSCRIPT OF LABEL ACCOMPANYING THE PIANO. VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIGURE 46: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, WEST ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

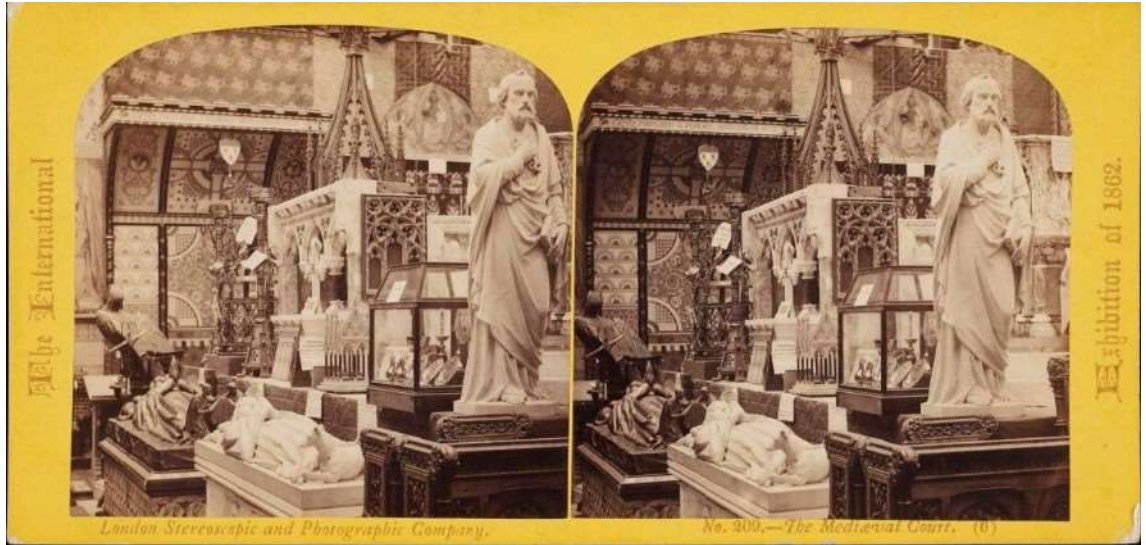


FIGURE 47: WILLIAM ENGLAND, *THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1862, NO. 209, MEDIAEVAL COURT*. STEREOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPH MOUNTED ON YELLOW CARD, 8.3 X 17.5CM. VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIGURE 48: JAMES GILLRAY, *SCIENTIFIC RESEARCHES*, 1802. COLOURED ETCHING, 25.2 x 35.3CM. PRINTS & DRAWINGS, BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIGURE 49: *AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM—A PERIPATETIC ART LECTURER*, 1881. PUBLISHED IN THE *GRAPHIC*, 5 NOVEMBER 1881, 476.



FIGURE 50: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *WILLIAM MORRIS GIVING A WEAVING DEMONSTRATION*, 1888. DRAWING, 22.9 x 17.5CM, WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY.



FIGURE 51: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, WEST ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

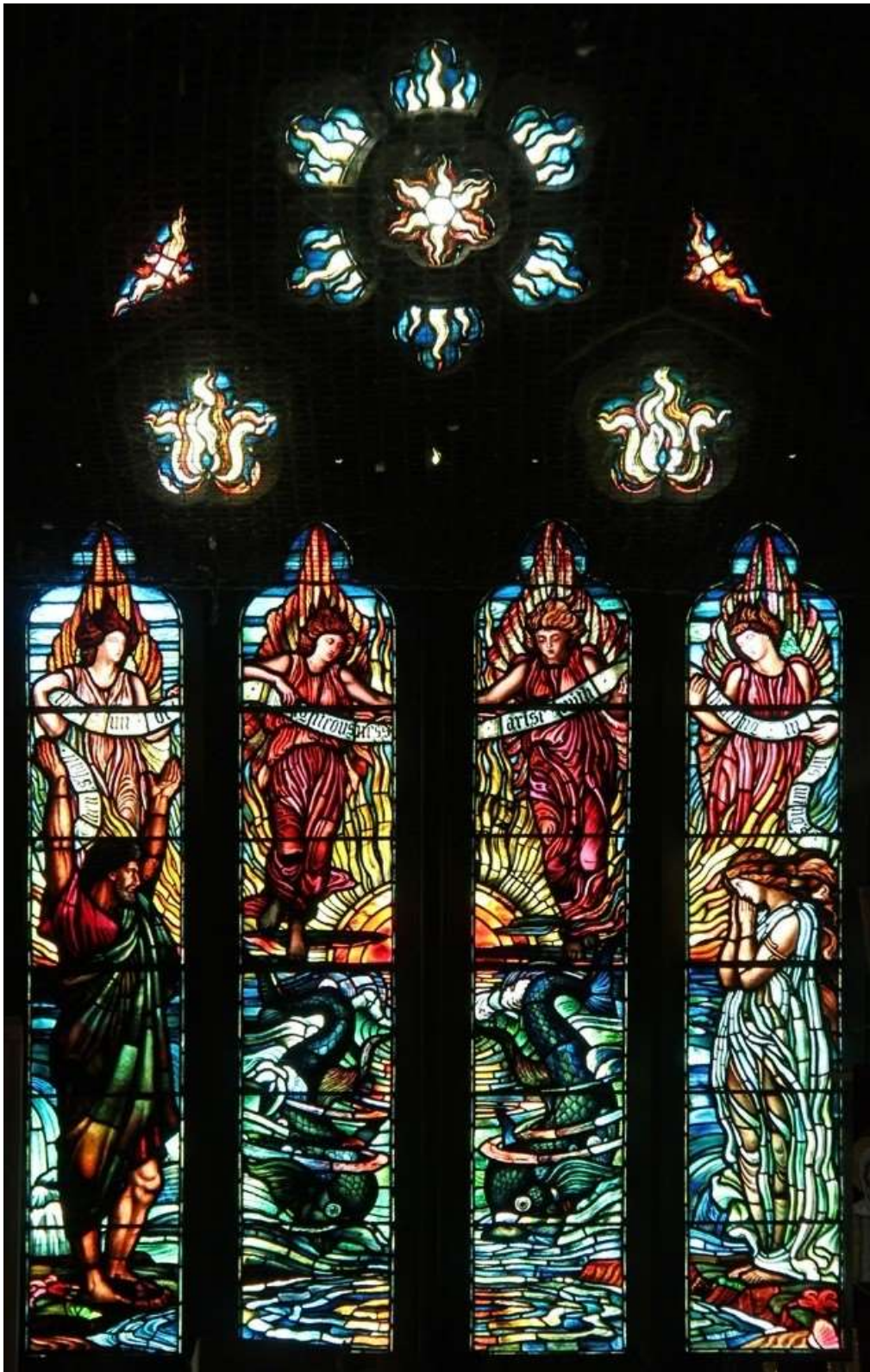


FIGURE 52: WALTER CRANE, *THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS*, (FORMER) CHURCH OF THE ARK OF THE COVENANT, LONDON N16, 1896. STAINED GLASS WINDOW, WEST SIDE OF CHURCH.



FIGURE 53: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, WEST ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



FIGURE 54: HELEN COOMBE, DECORATIVE WORK ON HARPSICHORD, 1896. ARNOLD DOLMETSCH COLLECTION, HORNIMAN MUSEUM.



FIGURE 55: HELEN COOMBE, DECORATIVE WORK ON HARPSICHORD, 1896. ARNOLD DOLMETSCH COLLECTION, HORNIMAN MUSEUM.



FIGURE 56: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



FIGURE 57: WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE REYNOLDS, LECTERN, 1896. ST. CUTHBERT'S, EARLS COURT, LONDON.



FIGURE 58: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



FIGURE 59: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, SOUTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



FIGURE 60: EMERY WALKER, FIFTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, SOUTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1896. PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

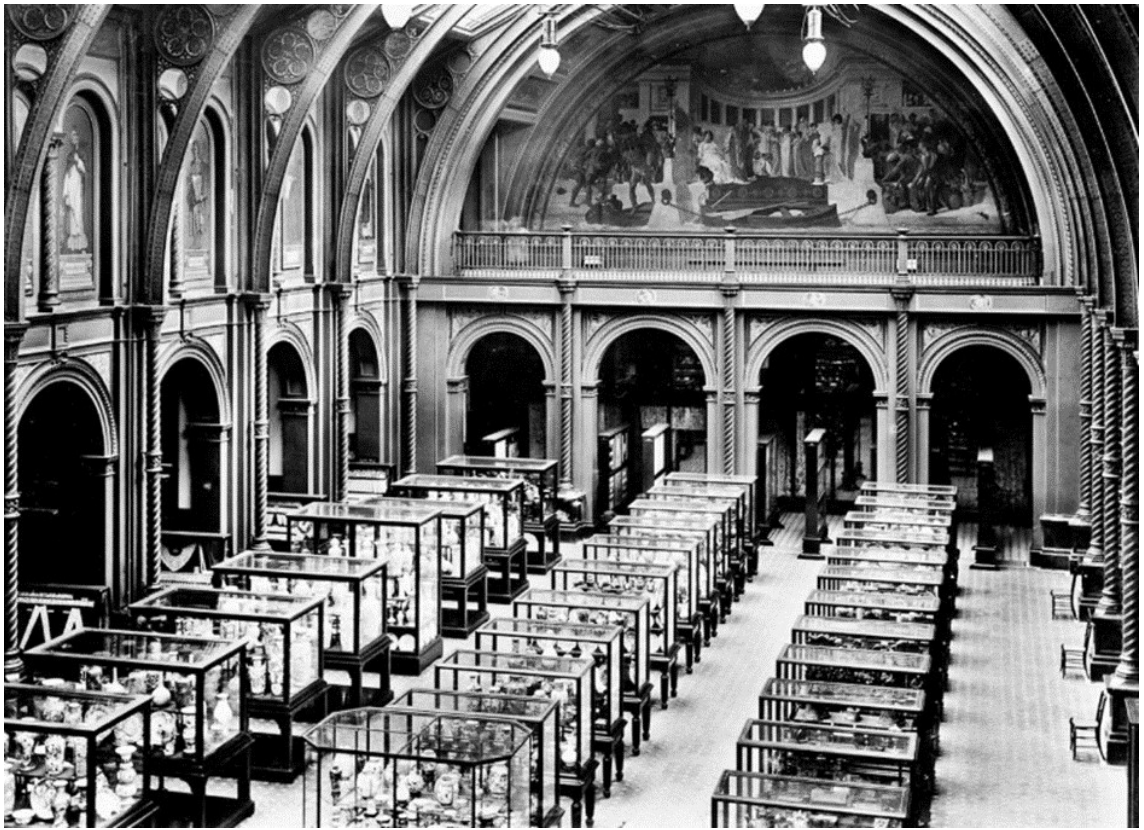
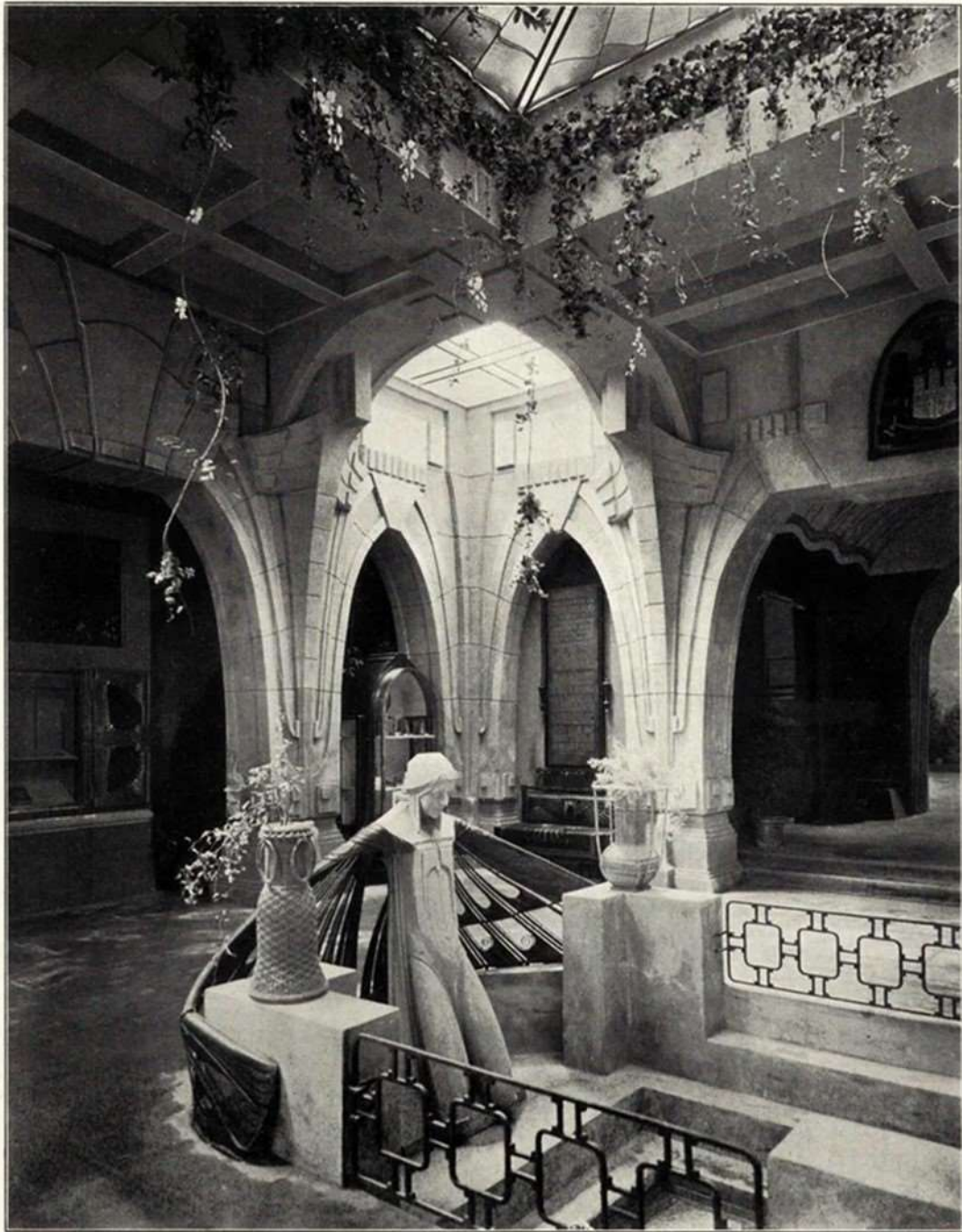


FIGURE 61: ISABEL AGNES, *VIEW OF THE SOUTH COURT AT SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM*, c. 1886. PHOTOGRAPH, VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.



Prof. Peter Behrens—Darmstadt. - Vestibule hambourgeois de la section de l'Empire d'Allemagne. Vue de l'entrée vers la gauche.

Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs modernes. Turin 1902.

FIGURE 62: THE GERMAN ENTRANCE HALL, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 27, no. 117 (Dec. 1902): 189.



FIGURE 63: THE ENGLISH SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 26, no. 114 (Sept. 1902): 256.



FIGURE 64: THE ENGLISH SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 26, no. 114 (Sept. 1902): 257.



FIGURE 65: THE BELGIAN SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 27, no. 118 (Jan. 1903): 280.



FIGURE 66: THE AUSTRIAN SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 26, no. 111 (June 1902): 45.

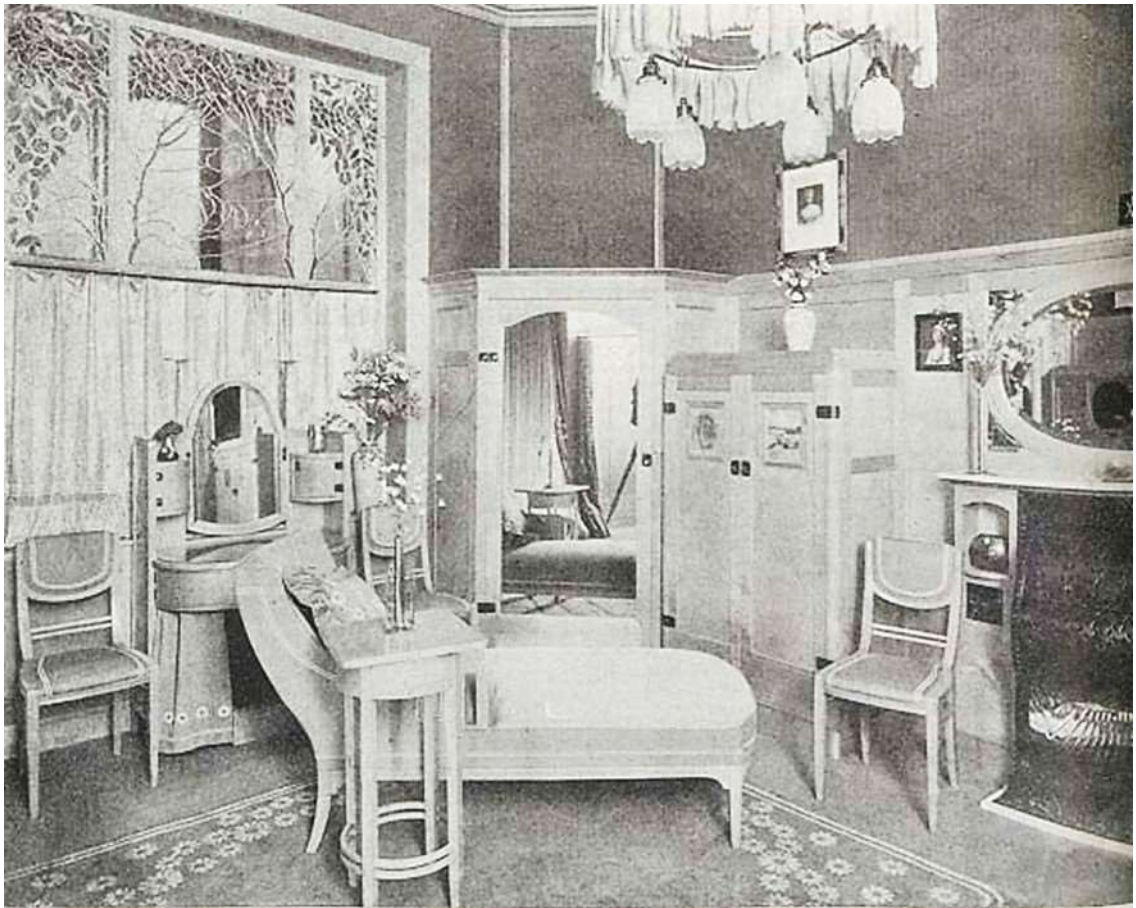


FIGURE 67: THE AUSTRIAN SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 26, no. 111 (June 1902): 46.

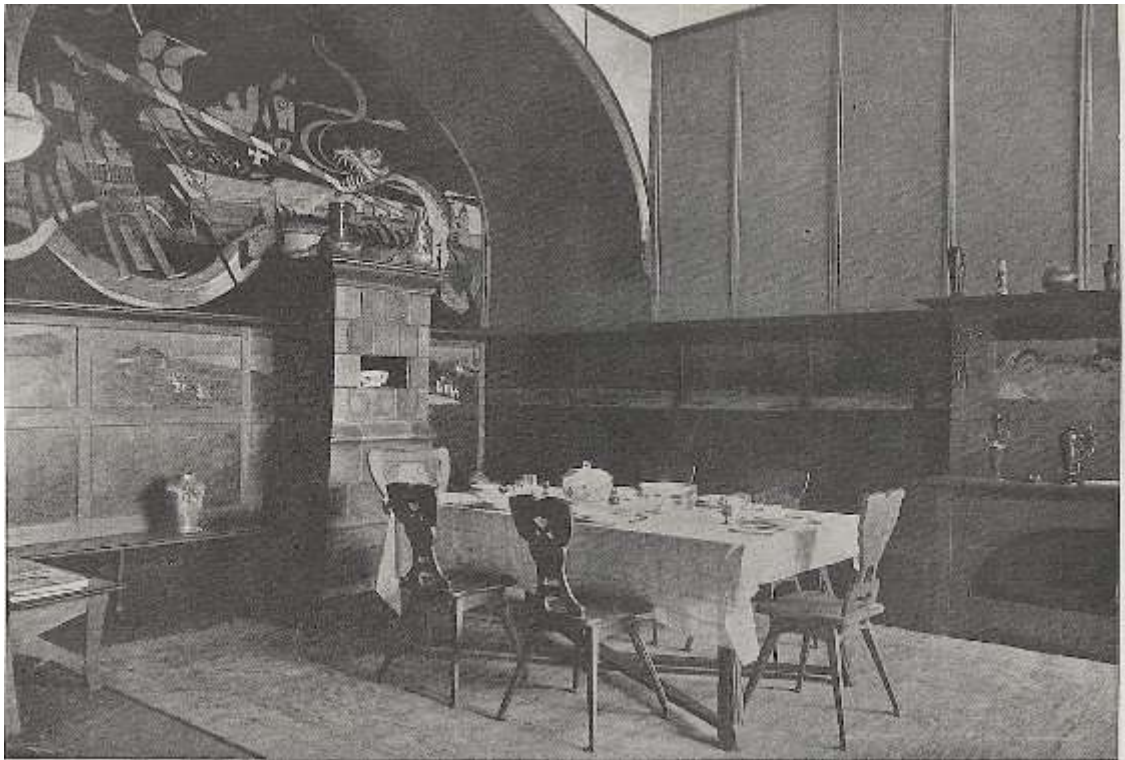


FIGURE 68: THE GERMAN SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 27, no. 117 (Dec. 1902): 190.



FIGURE 69: THE ROSE BOUDOIR, SCOTTISH SECTION, TURIN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF DECORATIVE ARTS, 1902.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 26, no. 112 (July 1902): 91.



FIGURE 70: GEORGE WALTON'S RECESS, NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY. SEVENTH EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY, 1903.

Photograph, published in *Studio* Vol. 28, no. 119 (Jan. 1903): 29.

SPORTING GOODS 46

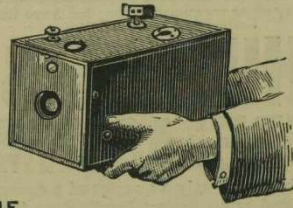


New Kodak Cameras.
"You press the button, we do the rest."
(FOR YOU CAN DO IT YOURSELF.)
Seven New Styles and Sizes
ALL LOADED WITH
Transparent Films.

For Sale by all Photo, Stock Dealers. *Send for Catalogue.*
THE EASTMAN COMPANY, Rochester, N. Y.

FIGURE 71: EASTMAN KODAK ADVERTISEMENT, 1890. ELLIS COLLECTION OF KODAKIANA, DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, NORTH CAROLINA.

The Camera
that takes
the World!



THE

KODAK

*No previous knowledge of
Photography necessary.*

"YOU PRESS THE BUTTON, WE DO THE
REST,"

(Unless you prefer to do the rest yourself)

AND THE PICTURE IS FINISHED.

Price from £1 6s.

EASTMAN PHOTOGRAPHIC
MATERIALS CO. LD.,
115-117 OXFORD-ST.,
LONDON, W.

SEND FOR PRETTY, ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE,
POST FREE.

FIGURE 72: ADVERTISEMENT FOR KODAK CAMERAS, 1893. *ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS*, 16 SEPTEMBER 1893.

SOFT WHITE HANDS IN A SINGLE NIGHT



There are nothing so soft and white as a single night's use of this cream. It is the best for the hands, and it is the only one that does not dry the skin. It is the only one that does not dry the skin. It is the only one that does not dry the skin.

For Eczema, Itching, Blistering, Fissures, Fersah Palm, Shapless Skin, And Painful Finger Ends. The treatment is simply Wonderful.

Small Boxes 1/6. Large Boxes 2/6.

F. DARRAV, London.

MARVINE GELOIDS

FOOD AND DRINK TABLETS

(Discovered by one of our greatest living Chemists)

A MEAL ON A FINGERTIP

A DELICIOUS CONFECTION, With delicate nourishing properties.

Containing nothing but Fruit, Food, and Vegetables. Travellers, Cyclists, Athletes, Invalids, Convalescents, etc.

7d., 1s. 10d., 2s. 10d.

MARVINE, LTD.,
28, ELDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

N & C RAINCOAT

"PERRAMUS" PROOF.

Not merely Shower Proof, but Proof against the Heaviest Rain. LIGHT IN WEIGHT! SMART IN APPEARANCE! MODERATE IN PRICE!

TEST—A garden hose turned on to simulate a heavy shower of rain may be played on the cloth for an hour or more without wetting the garment.

DURABILITY—The Rainproof quality of Perramus will last as long as the garment lasts.

HEALTHINESS—Perspiration will not condense on the inside, as so frequently occurs in opaque waterproof garments, and which is a prolific source of Chills, Rheumatism, &c.

NICHOLSON & Co.,
Exchange Street, Oneetham, MANCHESTER,
And 21, Golden Square, LONDON, W.

Homocea Embrocation

For SWOLLEN or TIRED FEET, SORE MUSCLES, STIFF JOINTS, all RHEUMATIC PAINS, and in fact for Pain everywhere. Absolutely the Best Thing of its Kind in the World.

Relief guaranteed to Purchaser, or money returned.

Put up in collapsible tubes, and sold at 7d. and 1/6 each; also in bottles, 1/8 and 2/6, the latter is equal to twelve 7d. tubes. Of all Chemists, and the London Depot, 99, Strand.

Free by post for value in stamps from HOMOCEA WORKS, BIRKENHEAD.

S. SMITH & SONS, Watchmakers to the Admiralty, Strand.

Our "STRAND" Watches contain the largest number of IMPROVEMENTS, and are BETTER and more UP-TO-DATE than any Watch yet produced.

The most delicate, important, and valuable part of a watch is the balance, and this has hitherto been subjected to an omission that allows dirt and damp to affect the movement. In our invention this is overcome without adding to the size and allows free use of the regulator.



"STRAND" WATCH with Cap on.

ALL ENGLISH—Silver, £3 10s. Gold, £13 15s. Special Size for Ladies, £5 15s. and £12 15s.

Price Medal, Electrical Exhibition, 1887, for Non-Magnetic Chronographs. Certificate and Warranty with every Watch. Old Watches and Jewellery taken in exchange. Postage free at our own risk. Our "Treatise on Watches," just published, 180 pp., 400 Illustrations, Second Edition. Free on Application.

Everyone may now take good Photographs.

THE EASTMAN Cartridge System KODAKS

REQUIRE NO DARK ROOM FOR CHANGING FILMS.

PRICES £1 1s. to £5 5s.

Rolls of film for 12 exposures can be put in and taken out in daylight, whilst you sit comfortably in a chair. You see the picture—portrait, figure, or landscape—that you are taking, and touch a button. "We do the rest," or you can do it yourself if you wish.

Pocket Kodaks, No. 4 Cartridge Kodaks, Bullet Kodaks, Bull's-Eye Kodaks.

Illustrated Price Lists Free.

EASTMAN Photographic Materials Co. Ltd.,
115-117 OXFORD ST., LONDON, and in CHICAGO.

2000 PRIZES.

EASTMAN'S EXHIBITION, New Gallery, Regent St., London, W. Lasts from the 1st to the 31st of October, 1897.

Pumps for Every Service

Imitation Pumps, Mining Pumps, Waterworks Plants, Fire Pumps for Land or Steam, Locomotive Pumps.

DILSOMETER ENGINEERING CO. LD.
9, ELMS IRON WORKS, LONDON, E.C.

OETZMANN & CO.

62, 64, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, and 79, HAMPSTEAD ROAD, W. (Near Tottenham Court Road);
61, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN;
75, UNION STREET, RYDE, I. W.

21/- BEDSTEAD BEDDING COMPLETE



3ft. IRON BEDSTEAD and BEDDING COMPLETE with Woven Wire Mattress, Wool Mattress, Bolster, and Feather Filler ... 21/-

CALLARD & BOWERS BUTTER-SCOTCH

(The Celebrated Sweet for Children.)

Really wholesome Confectionery.



LAYETTES, HAND MADE IN THE BEST STYLE.

£11, £25, £47, £66.

Baby Linnen Set for Patterns, Three Guineas; £20 Layettes for India, £37.

Handsome Christmas Robes and Cloaks, Balise Frocks, trimmed real lace, &c. Goods sent on approval, with prices plainly marked, on receipt of reference or deposit.

New Price List of Trousseaux, Layettes, Registered Sewing Machines and Bobs, Tea Gowns, &c., post free.

ADDELY BOURNE,
Ladies' Warehouses,
174, SLOANE STREET, LONDON.

HINDE'S HAIR CURLERS.

Are used without heat. They have no other object than to curl and set the hair. They are used in 10, 15, and 20, in every town and village in the three Kingdoms.

PINK'S JAMS. CHEAPEST.

NO ARTIFICIAL COLOURING. BEST. NO CHEMICAL PRESERVATIVE.

LANOLINE Toilet Preparations

For Health and Beauty of the SKIN.

LANOLINE Toilet Soap

Wholesale Depot—67, HOLBORN VIADUCT, LONDON.

Silks

of any Description, Latest Styles, for Dresses, &c. Unequalled for Beauty and Richness. Free Carriage of Dress Length to any Part of the World. Patterns Post Free.

ADOLF GREBBER & CO., ZURICH (Switzerland),
SILK MANUFACTURING UNION,
By Special Appointment to the Royal Court.

NEGRETTI & ZAMBRA'S BINOCULAR TELESCOPES.



FOR Military Service, Deer-Stalking, or Yachting

Mounted in Aluminium or Bronze Metal.

Long Range, with High Magnifying Power and Perfect Definition.

By a combination of lenses, Negretti and Zambra have produced a glass eight inches in length, possessing all the advantages of the larger size binocular telescope.

Illustrated Price Lists sent free to all parts of the World.

NEGRETTI & ZAMBRA,
Scientific Instrument Makers and Opticians to the Queen.

38, HOLBORN VIADUCT, E.C.

45, Cornhill, 122, Regent Street (Negretti) and Gamble's Photographic Studio, Crystal Palace. Telephone Address: "Negretti, London." Telephone No. 599.

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NO INFRINGEMENT

THE PNEUMATIC TYRE CO. LTD. AND THE DUNLOP PNEUMATIC TYRE CO. LTD. (Inventors)

THE IXION PATENT PNEUMATIC TYRE CO. LTD.

His Lordship found for the Defendants on the issue of infringement, and in the costs.

All those who require the Ixion Tyre should be addressed to: The Secretary, The New Ixion Tyre & Cycle Company, Ltd., 23, Collyer Ave., London, E.C.

Read Department, 21a, Oxford Street, W.

RITTER SKATES

For ROAD USE.

We will send, Free of Charge, if this paper is mentioned, our new Booklet on "ROAD SKATING," which gives every information on the subject.



The ROAD SKATE CO.,
271, OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.

MELLIN'S FOOD

FOR INFANTS AND INVALIDS

Before using any other preparation, apply for free sample.

MELLIN'S FOOD WORKS, PECKHAM, S.E.

FIGURE 73: KODAK ADVERTISEMENT. GRAPHIC, 11 SEPTEMBER 1897.

*No Camera is a "Kodak" unless
made by the Eastman Company.*

**The EASTMAN
PHOTOGRAPHIC
EXHIBITION**

*At the NEW GALLERY,
121A REGENT STREET, W.*

CLOSES . . .
November 16th, 1897.

Open Daily 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Evenings, Mondays and Thursdays, 8 to 10.

Kodak Pictures by Members of the Royal Family.
Photographs by Eminent Exhibitors.
A striking novelty in Kodaks.
Competition Pictures and Awards.
Music Afternoons and Evenings.

Admission on presentation of visiting card or by complimentary
tickets.

EASTMAN Photographic
Materials Co. Ltd.,

115-117 OXFORD STREET, LONDON.
And 60 Cheapside,

FIGURE 74: ADVERTISEMENT FOR EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION. *ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS*, 27
NOVEMBER 1897.



FIGURE 75: KODAK SHOP INTERIOR, 171-173 REGENT STREET, LONDON, 1900. PHOTOGRAPH. SCIENCE & MEDIA MUSEUM, BRADFORD.

THE KODAK.

WITH this camera is presented an entirely novel and extremely attractive system of Amateur Photography, by which the finest pictures may be taken by persons having no knowledge of the art.

The comparative size of the "KODAK" is shown by the accompanying illustrations, and its popularity is not surprising when its compactness and its practical worth are considered.

AS A TOURIST'S CAMERA

it is unrivalled. No cumbersome tripod, plate-holders, or other effects of the ordinary outfit are needed. In its carrying case, with shoulder strap, it is of no more trouble in transportation than an ordinary field-glass—in fact, it looks not unlike one.

A trip SOUTH, to CALIFORNIA, or to EUROPE

may be rendered doubly enjoyable, and a complete illustrated record of interesting scenes and incidents secured by use of this little instrument.

ONE HUNDRED EXPOSURES

may be made without "reloading" the camera.

AS A HOLIDAY GIFT

the KODAK offers novelty, beauty, and usefulness, and cannot but be highly appreciated by the recipient.

PRINCE HENRI D'ORLEANS has used the "KODAK," and writing regarding it said:

"The results are marvellous. The enlargements which you sent me are superb."

MR. GEO. G. ROCKWOOD, of 17 Union Square, New York, an authority on matters pertaining to photography, writes:

"I have used one of your 'Kodak' Cameras during the past summer, and am greatly pleased with its work. It is simple, practical, and perfect."

THE EASTMAN DRY PLATE and FILM CO.,
ROCHESTER, N. Y.,
115 OXFORD STREET, LONDON.

SEND FOR DESCRIPTIVE CIRCULARS.

47

FIGURE 76: ADVERTISEMENT FOR KODAK, 1888. PUBLISHED IN *HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE*. ELLIS COLLECTION OF KODAKIANA, DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, NORTH CAROLINA.



FIGURE 77: ADVERTISEMENT FOR KODAK: KITTY KRAMER HOLDING THE KODAK NUMBER 2, 1890. ELLIS COLLECTION OF KODAKIANA, DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, NORTH CAROLINA.



FIGURE 78: ADVERTISEMENT FOR KODAK AT CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR, 1893. PUBLISHED IN *SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE*. ELLIS COLLECTION OF KODAKIANA, DUKES UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, NORTH CAROLINA.

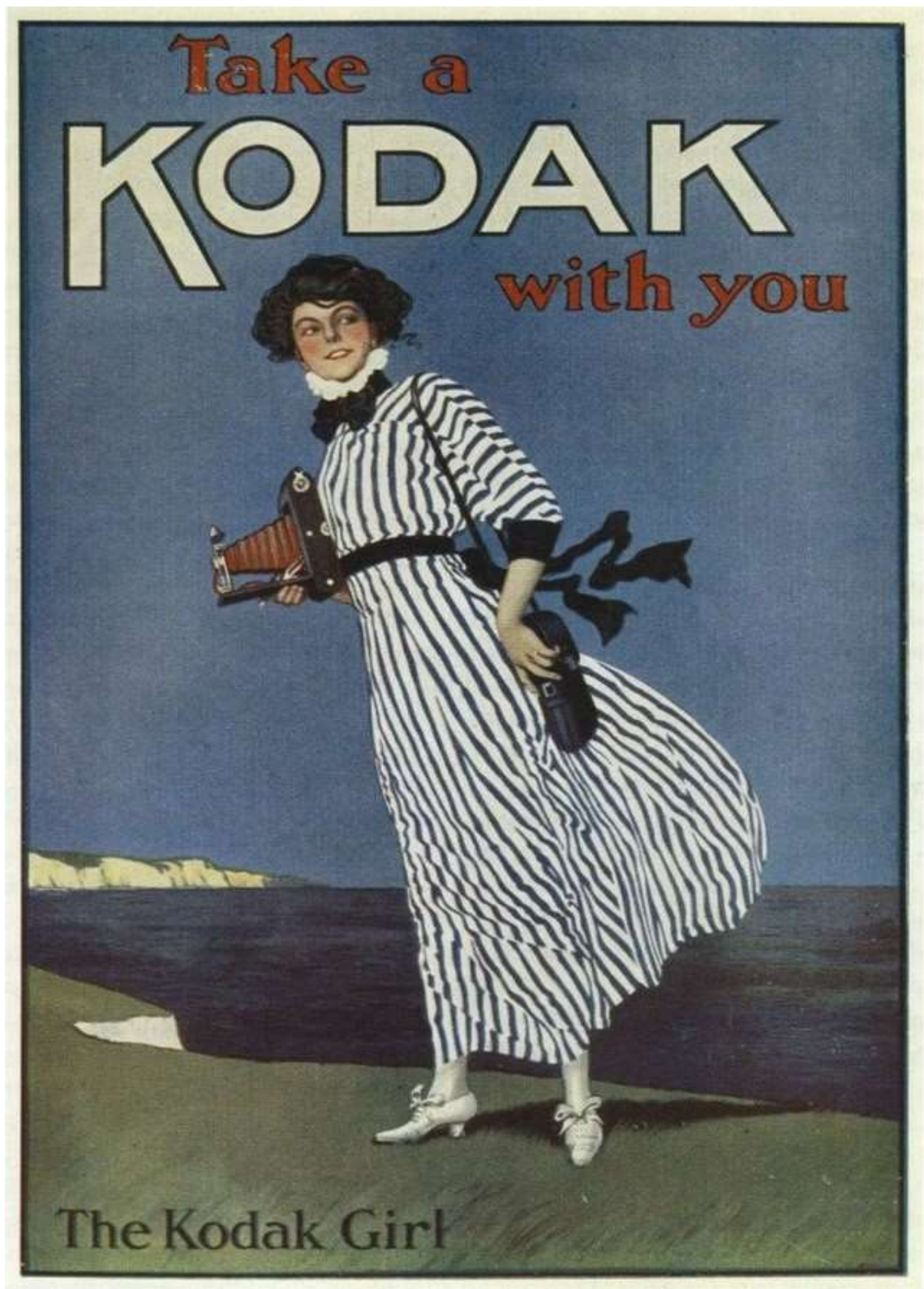


FIGURE 79: JOHN HASSALL, POSTER, JULY 1910. KODAK HISTORICAL COLLECTION, BRITISH LIBRARY.

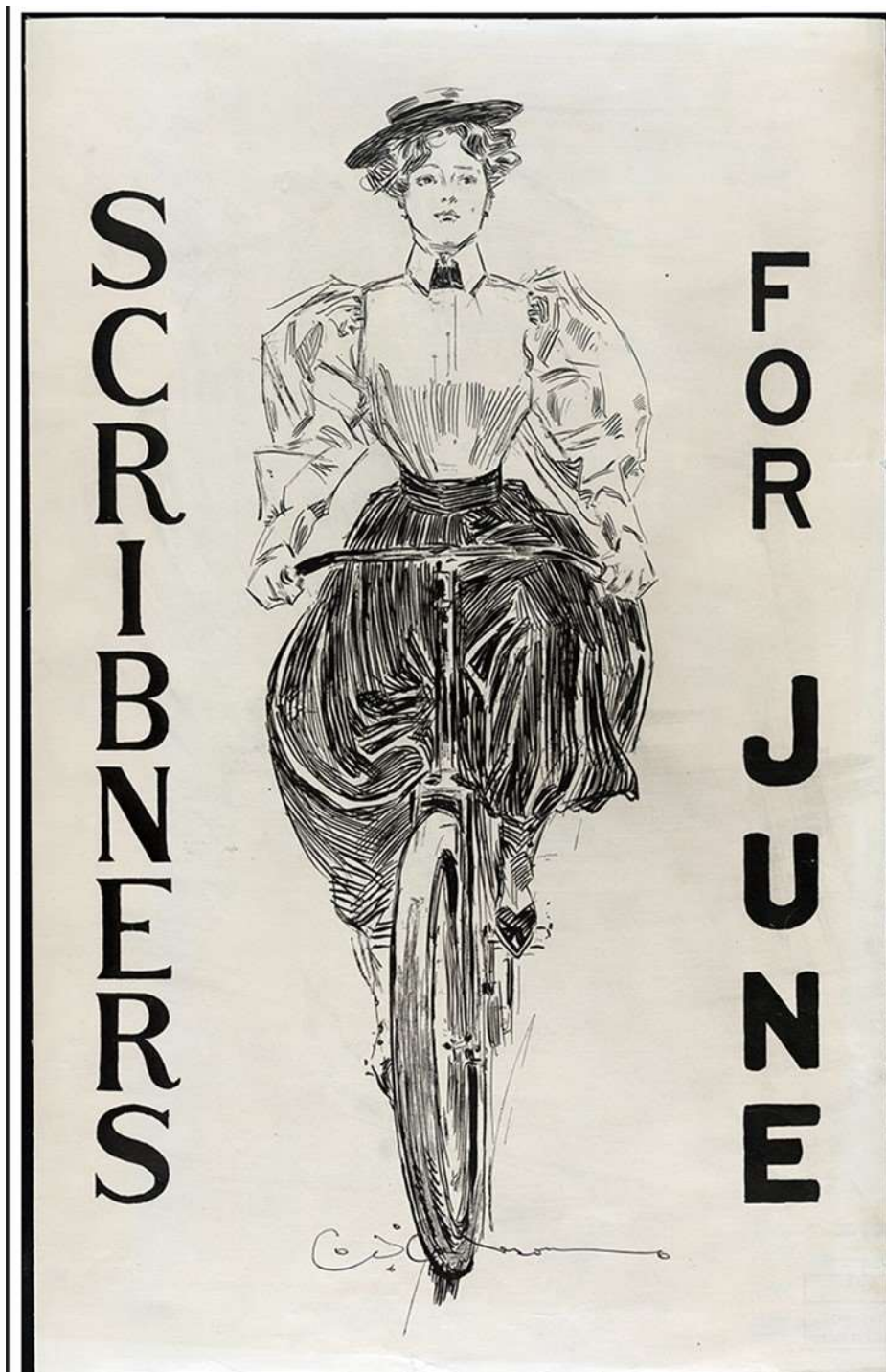


FIGURE 80: CHARLES DANA GIBSON, POSTER ADVERTISING *SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE*, JUNE 1895.



FIGURE 81: *PRINTING NEGATIVES BY SUNLIGHT, KODAK FACTORY, HARROW, C. 1900.* PHOTOGRAPH. KODAK HISTORICAL COLLECTION, BRITISH LIBRARY.



FIGURE 82: EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1897. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF GEORGE EASTMAN MUSEUM COLLECTION, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK.



FIGURE 83: EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, NORTH ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1897. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF GEORGE EASTMAN MUSEUM COLLECTION, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK.



May. "Mamma! Mamma! don't go on like this, *pray!*!"

Mamma (who has smashed a favourite pot) "What have I left to live for?"

May. "Haven't you got *me*, Mamma?"

Mamma. "You, Child! You're not Unique!! There are six of you — a Complete Set!!"

FIGURE 84: GEORGE DU MAURIER, *ACUTE CHINAMANIA*. DRAWING, *PUNCH*, 17 DECEMBER 1874.



FIGURE 85: WILLIAM ROWNTREE'S TEA ROOMS, GLASGOW. PHOTOGRAPH. GEORGE WALTON ARCHIVE, ARCHIVE OF ART & DESIGN, VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIGURE 86: MRS CRANSTON'S DINING AND TEA ROOMS AT BUCHANAN STREET, GLASGOW.
PHOTOGRAPH, T&R ANNAN AND SONS LTD., GLASGOW.



FIGURE 87: GEORGE WALTON'S STENCIL DESIGNS AT THE PHOTOGRAPHIC SALON, 1897. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SCIENCE AND MEDIA MUSEUM, BRADFORD.

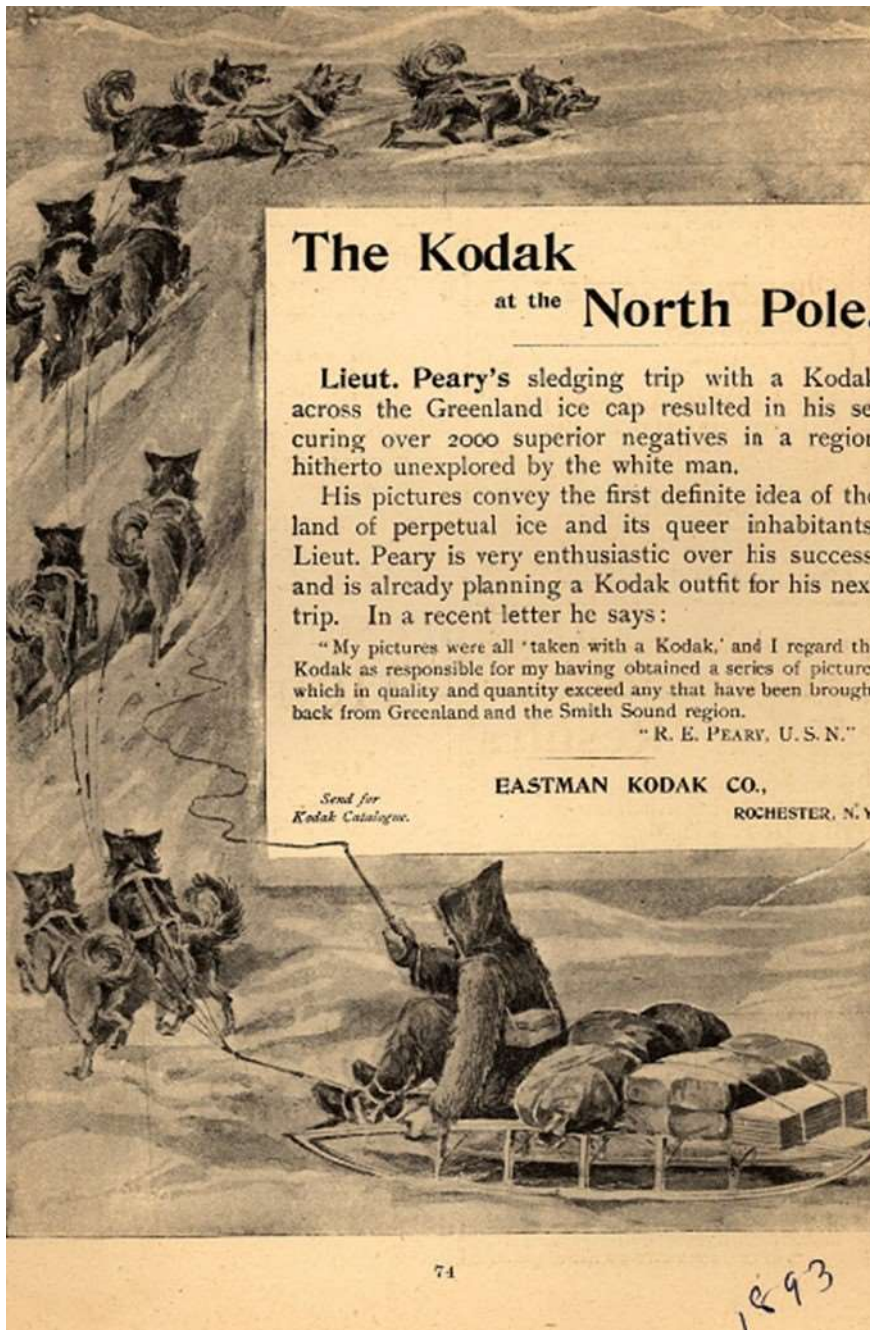


FIGURE 88: EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, INVITATION ROOM (WEST ROOM) NEW GALLERY, 1897. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF KODAK ARCHIVES, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK.

The photographs from the Royal family are on the short wall.



FIGURE 89: EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, WEST ROOM, NEW GALLERY, 1897. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF NATIONAL SCIENCE AND MEDIA MUSEUM, BRADFORD.



The Kodak
at the **North Pole.**

Lieut. Peary's sledging trip with a Kodak across the Greenland ice cap resulted in his securing over 2000 superior negatives in a region hitherto unexplored by the white man.

His pictures convey the first definite idea of the land of perpetual ice and its queer inhabitants. Lieut. Peary is very enthusiastic over his success, and is already planning a Kodak outfit for his next trip. In a recent letter he says:

"My pictures were all 'taken with a Kodak,' and I regard the Kodak as responsible for my having obtained a series of pictures which in quality and quantity exceed any that have been brought back from Greenland and the Smith Sound region.

"R. E. PEARY, U. S. N."

Send for
Kodak Catalogue.

EASTMAN KODAK CO.,
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

74
1893

FIGURE 90: ADVERTISEMENT FOR KODAK, 1893. ELLIS COLLECTION OF KODAKIANA, DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, NORTH CAROLINA.



FIGURE 91: GEORGE DAVISON, *GIRLS AT A WELL*, c. 1888. SILVER GELATIN PRINT, SCIENCE & MEDIA MUSEUM, BRADFORD.



FIGURE 92: JOHN WILLIAM WATERHOUSE, *THE MAGIC CIRCLE*, 1886. OIL ON CANVAS, 182.9 X 127CM. TATE.

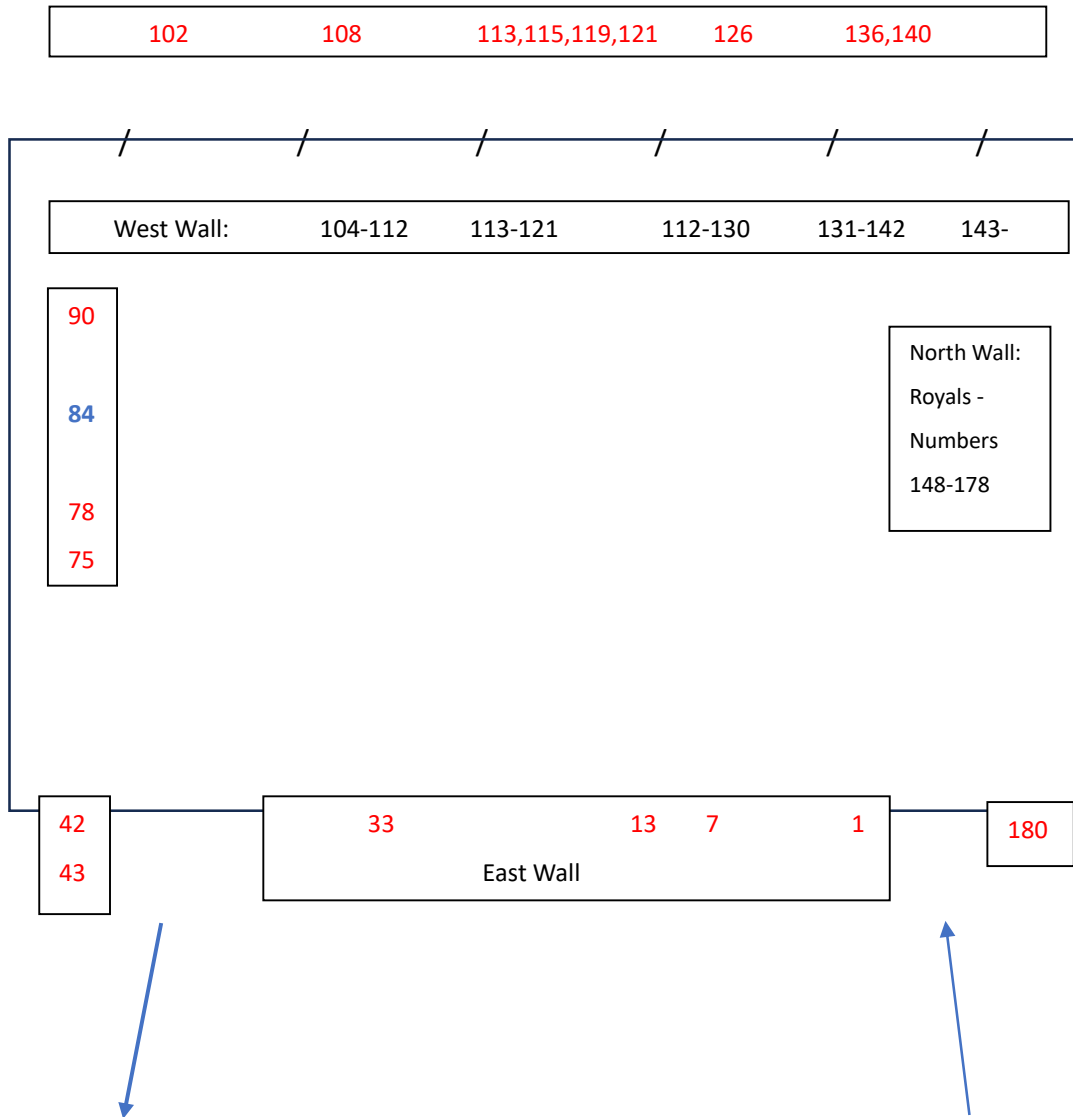


FIGURE 93: DIAGRAM SHOWING APPROXIMATE CONFIGURATION OF WEST ROOM AT EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, 1897.

The numbers in black are the known positions of photographs.
 The numbers in red denote the approximate placing of Eastman Kodak company photographs.
 Number 84 (blue on south wall) is George Eastman's personal contribution.
 The forward slashes denote curtain drops on the west wall.
 Not to scale.

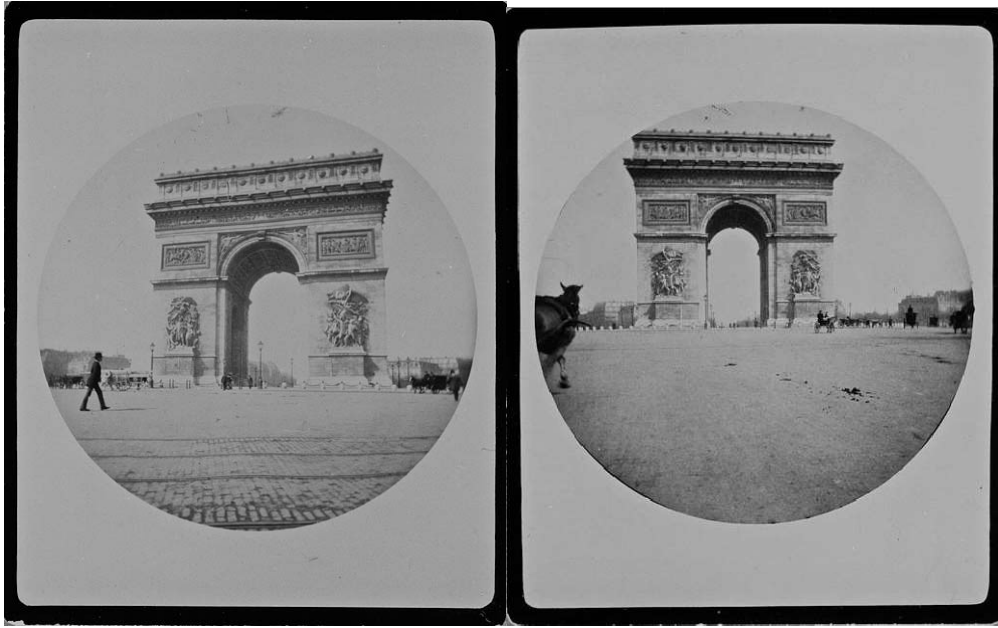


FIGURE 94: GEORGE EASTMAN, *ARC DE TRIOMPHE*, NO DATE BUT BEFORE 1897. EASTMAN PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, RIVER CAMPUS LIBRARIES, UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK.

104	107	110
105	108	111
106	109	112

FIGURE 95: DIAGRAM SHOWING CONFIGURATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS ON SECTION OF WEST WALL, EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, 1897.

- 104 Harold Baker: *Miss Lily Hanbury*
- 105 Major J.D. Lysaght: *Market Place in Brittany*
- 106 F.M. Sutcliffe: *Cornfield*
- 107 J. Craig Annan: *A Clyde Ferry*
- 108 Eastman Company: *An Altar Piece***
- 109 A Pringle: *Wave effect on a Norwegian Fjord*
- 110 Mrs. Francis Clarke: *Maytime*
- 111 H.P. Robinson: *Maiden Meditation*
- 112 A.R. Dresser: *Venice*



FIGURE 96: J. CRAIG ANNAN, *A DUTCH DOGCART*. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Frame designed and made by George Walton.

113	116	119
114	117	120
115	118	121

FIGURE 97: DIAGRAM SHOWING CONFIGURATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS ON SECTION OF WEST WALL, EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, 1897.

- 113 **Eastman Company: *Oxford Street in wet weather***
- 114 **H.P. Robinson: *Wayside gossip***
- 115 **Eastman Company: *Covent Garden***
- 116 Mrs Francis Clarke: *Lilac sunbonnet*
- 117 **H.P. Robinson: *Rusthall Quarry***
- 118 F.M. Sutcliffe: *On the beach*
- 119 **Eastman Company: *A hill road***
- 120 **H. P. Robinson: *Gathering bracken***
- 121 **Eastman Company: *Northumberland Avenue***

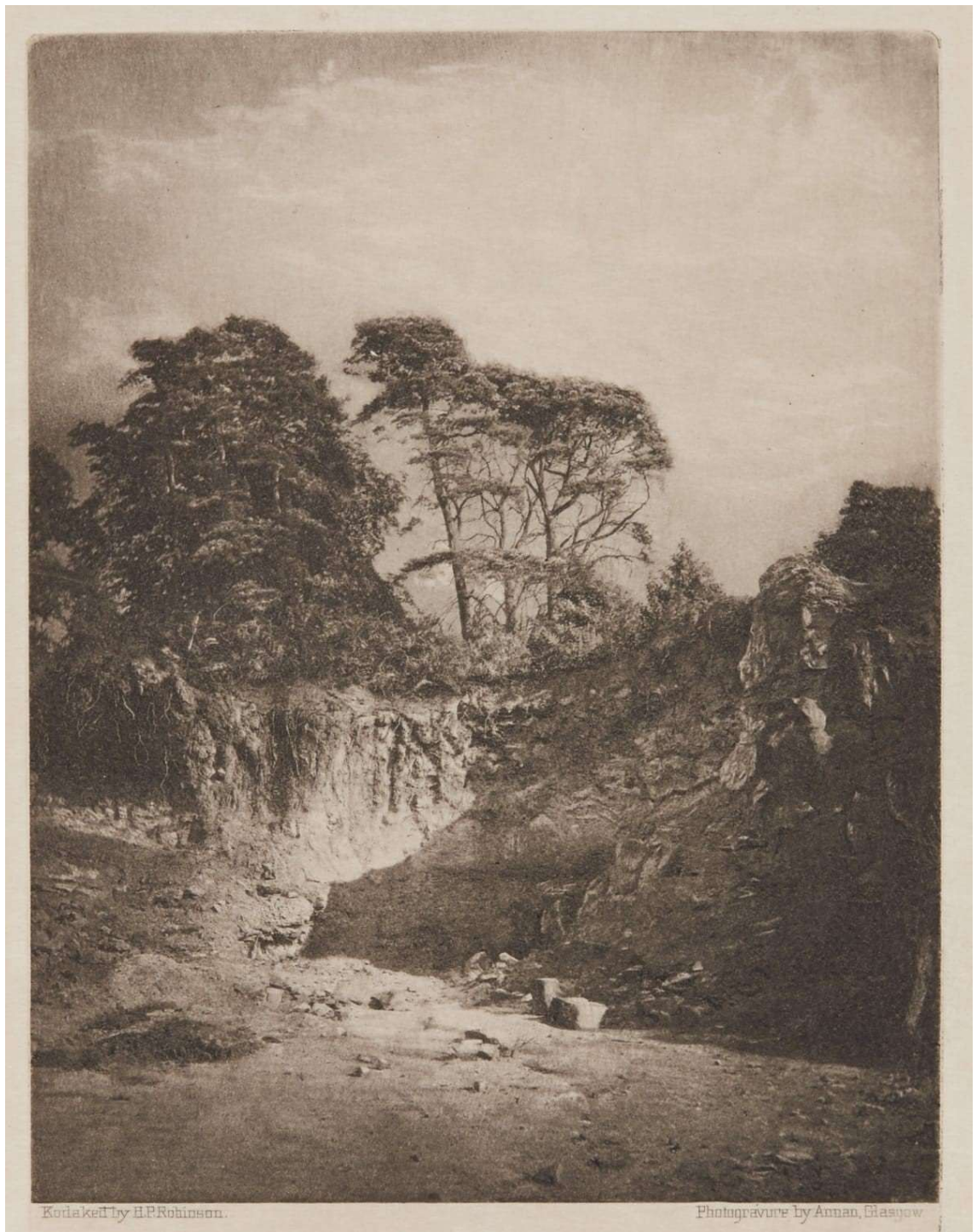


FIGURE 98: HENRY PEACH ROBINSON, *RUSTHALL QUARRY*, 1897. PHOTOGRAVURE PRINTED ON JAPAN PAPER.



FIGURE 99: HENRY PEACH ROBINSON, *WAYSIDE GOSSIP*, 1882. PHOTOGRAPH: ALBUMEN PRINT.

122	125	128
123	126	129
124	127	130

FIGURE 100: DIAGRAM SHOWING CONFIGURATION OF SECTION OF WEST WALL, EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, 1897.

- 122 J. Craig Annan: *A Dutch head gear*
- 123 Mrs Carine Cadby: *Flower study*
- 124 Miss McNicol: *Hounds*
- 125 Thomas Manly: *Japanese Screen*
- 126 Eastman Company: *A busy street***
- 127 George Davison: *Low Tide*
- 128 Miss Frances B. Johnston: *Portrait*
- 129 H.M. Smith: *By the river*
- 130 Miss McNicol: *A group of hounds*

131	134 135	139
132	136	140
133	137 - 138	141-142

FIGURE 101: DIAGRAM SHOWING CONFIGURATION OF SECTION OF WEST WALL, EASTMAN KODAK EXHIBITION, 1897.

- 131 Harold Baker: *Miss Lily Hanbury*
- 132 George Davison: *Hampton Church*
- 133 Charles Moss: *Mist on the River*
- 134 Thomas Manly: *Olivia*
- 135: A.R. Ashton: *Shoeblack*
- 136: Eastman Company: *Hill Sheep***
- 137: Major J.D. Lysaght: *At Youghal*
- 138: Major J.D. Lysaght: *Log Hauling at Interlaken*
- 139 Frances Johnston: *A Street Scene*
- 140 Eastman Company: *River At Evening***
- 141 Mrs Carine Cadby: *Honesty*
- 142 George Davison: *Lady and Child*



FIGURE 102: FRANCES B. JOHNSTON, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1897. PHOTOGRAVURE PRINTED ON JAPAN PAPER.



FIGURE 103: VISUAL COMPARISON OF FIGURE 102 WITH J. CRAIG ANNAN, *PORTRAIT OF A LADY*. BOTH PHOTOGRAVURES PRINTED ON JAPAN PAPER.



FIGURE 104: VISUAL COMPARISON OF FRANCES B. JOHNSTON, *SELF-PORTRAIT*, c. 1895, AND *PORTRAIT OF ETHEL REED*, 1895. PHOTOGRAPHS. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, WASHINGTON DC.

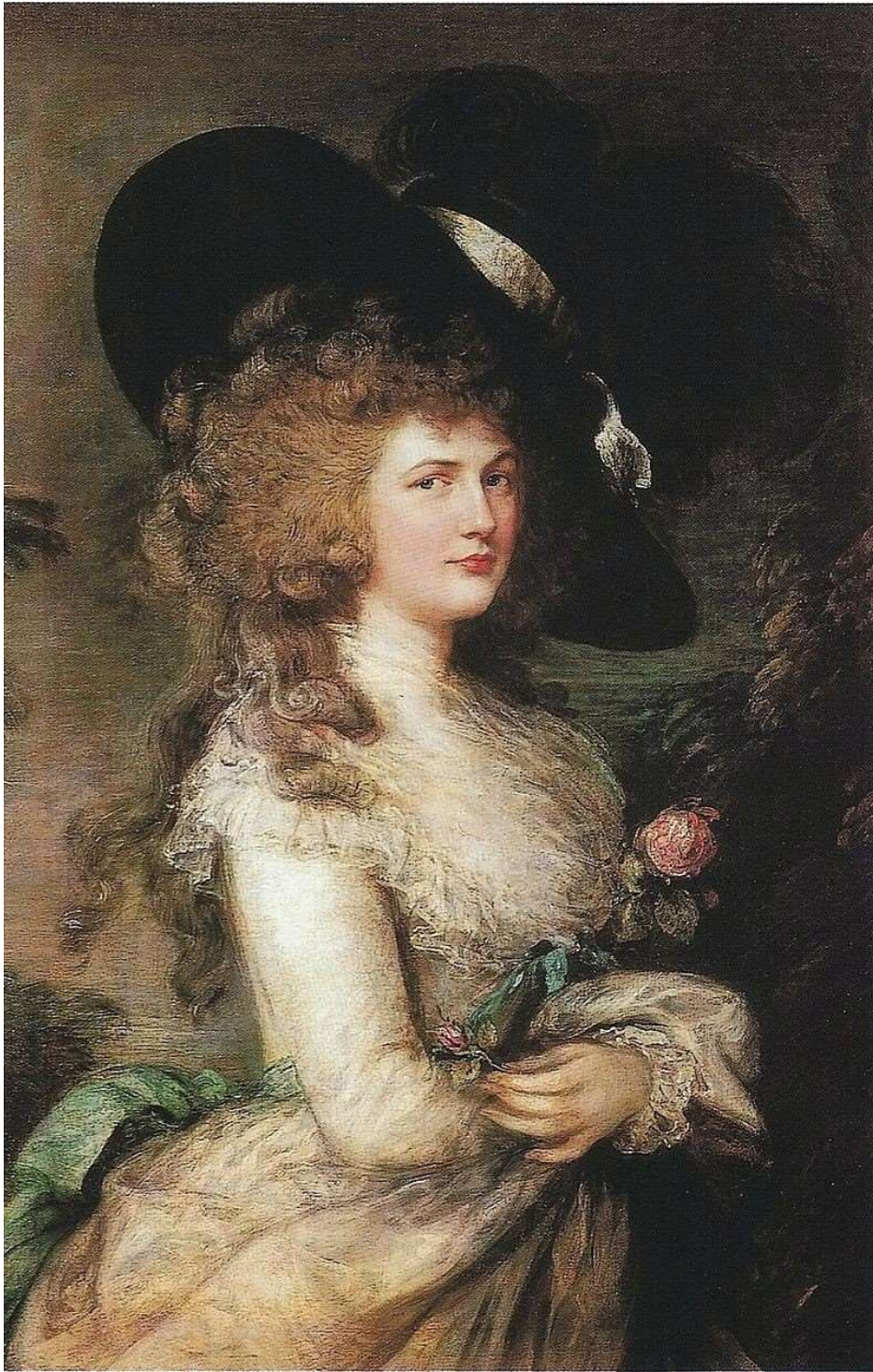


FIGURE 105: THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, *GEORGIANA CAVENDISH, DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE*, 1785-1787. OIL ON CANVAS, 127 X 101.5CM. CHATSWORTH HOUSE.



FIGURE 106: FRANCES B. JOHNSTON, *GAINSBOROUGH GIRL*, 1899. PHOTOGRAVURE, 26.83 X 18.89CM. MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART.



FIGURE 107: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899.

Photograph, laid on card, showing *The King's Daughter* (catalogue number 113) and *The Boat* (catalogue number 115), North Room, New Gallery. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Image courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.



FIGURE 108: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899.

Photograph, laid on card, showing section of the North Room, New Gallery. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Image courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.



FIGURE 109: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899.

Central Hall, west wall, showing *The Knights Summoned to the Quest* above a number of sketches and other preparatory work. Photograph, laid on card. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Image courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.

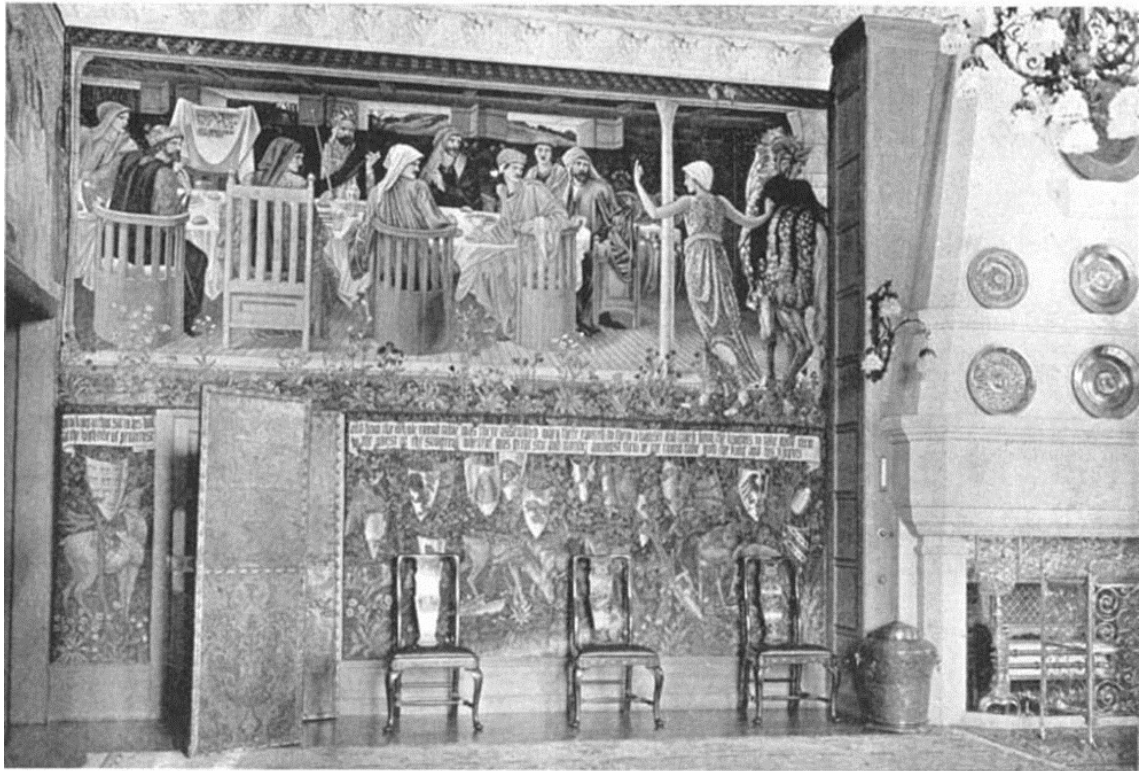


FIGURE 110: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE KNIGHTS SUMMONED TO THE QUEST*, 1891-1894.

Photograph showing the tapestry in situ in Stanmore Hall, before 1920. Image courtesy of Stanmore Hall.



FIGURE 111: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE KNIGHTS SUMMONED TO THE QUEST*, 1891-1894.
TAPESTRY: WOOL AND SILK ON COTTON WARP, WOVEN BY MORRIS & CO.

Sold at Sotheby's, 16 July 1920, to 2nd Duke Westminster for Eaton Hall, Cheshire.



FIGURE 112: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF THE EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899.

Central Hall, east wall, showing *The Attainment*. Photograph, laid on card. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Image courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.

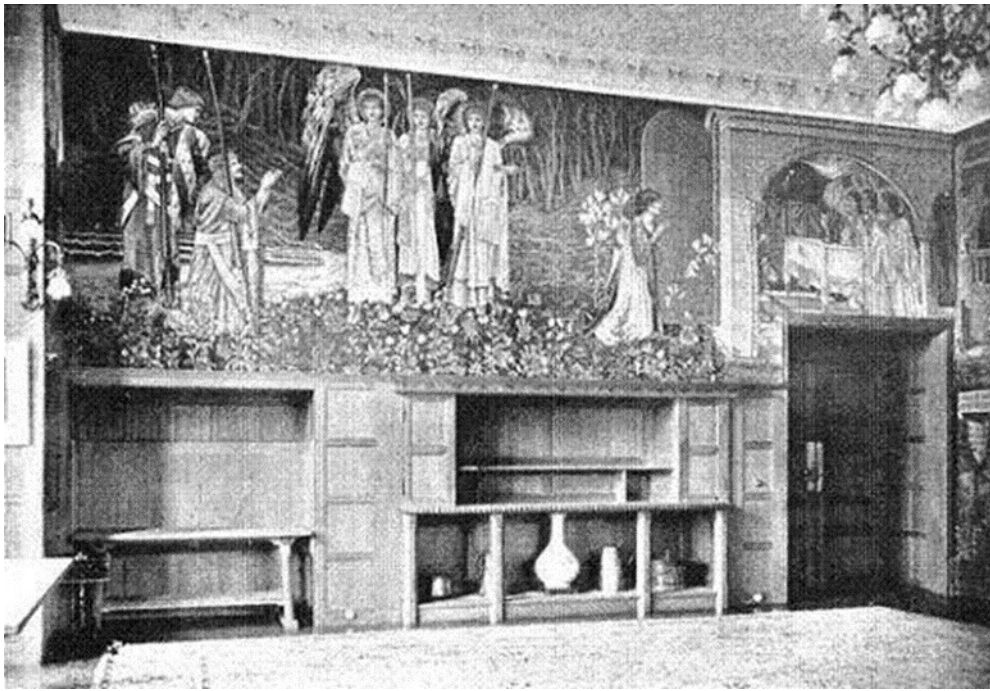


FIGURE 113: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE ATTAINMENT*, 1891-1894.

Photograph showing the tapestry in situ in Stanmore Hall, before 1920. Image courtesy of Stanmore Hall.



FIGURE 114: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE ATTAINMENT*, 1891-1894. TAPESTRY: WOOL AND SILK ON COTTON WARP, WOVEN BY MORRIS & CO.

Sold at Sotheby's, 16 July, 1920, to 2nd Duke Westminster for Eaton Hall, Cheshire. Currently in collection of Jimmy Page.



FIGURE 115: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION 1898 – 1899.

Central Hall, south wall, showing *The Failure of Sir Gawain*, *The Arming and Departure of the Knights* and *The Ship*. Photograph, laid on card. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Image courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.



FIGURE 116: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE FAILURE OF SIR GAWAIN AND THE SHIP*, 1891-1894. TAPESTRY: WOOL AND SILK ON COTTON WARP, WOVEN BY MORRIS & CO.

Sold at Sotheby's, 16 July, 1920, to 2nd Duke Westminster for Eaton Hall, Cheshire.



FIGURE 117: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE ARMING AND DEPARTURE OF THE KNIGHTS*, 1891-1894. TAPESTRY: WOOL AND SILK ON COTTON WARP, WOVEN BY MORRIS & CO.

Sold at Sotheby's, 16 July, 1920, to 2nd Duke Westminster for Eaton Hall, Cheshire.
Currently in the collection of Jimmy Page.



The Rock of Doom
1888.
Oil on canvas,
155 x 130 cm.
Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart.



The Tower of Brass, 1887-8.
Oil on canvas,
294.4 x 164.8 cm.
Glasgow Museums.



The Doom Fulfilled,
1885-8.
Oil on canvas, 155 x 140.5.
Staatsgalerie,
Stuttgart.

FIGURE 118: BURNE-JONES'S PAINTINGS PRESENTED AS THEY WOULD HAVE APPEARED (ALTHOUGH WITHOUT FRAMES) ON THE CENTRE OF WEST WALL OF THE WEST ROOM, NEW GALLERY, AT THE SUMMER EXHIBITION, 1888.



FIGURE 119: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899.

Photograph, laid on card, showing the south wall of the South Room, New Gallery. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Photograph courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.



FIGURE 120: EMERY WALKER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899. NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

West Room showing *King Cophetua & the Beggar Maid* in the centre of the west wall. Photograph.



FIGURE 121: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, 1898-1899.

Photograph, laid on card, showing the north wall of the North Room, New Gallery. One of an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Photograph courtesy of Peter and Renate Nahum.



FIGURE 122: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *The Days of Creation*, 1875-1876. WATERCOLOUR, GOUACHE, SHELL GOLD AND PLATINUM PAINT ON LININ-COVERED PANELS.

Shown here in the original frame (now lost). Photograph, 1934. Available at <https://theframeblog.com/2012/12/06/a-final-look-at-pre-raphaelite-frames/burne-jones-the-days-of-creation-in-original-frame-ill-sotheby-s-london-13june1934-lot99-harvard-art-museums-colour-pics-sm/>.

This picture is not complete by itself but is N^o 2 of a series of six water colour pictures representing the Days of Creation which are placed in a frame designed by the Painter, from which he desires they may not be removed.

FIGURE 123: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE DAYS OF CREATION*. INSCRIPTION ON BACK OF FRAME.

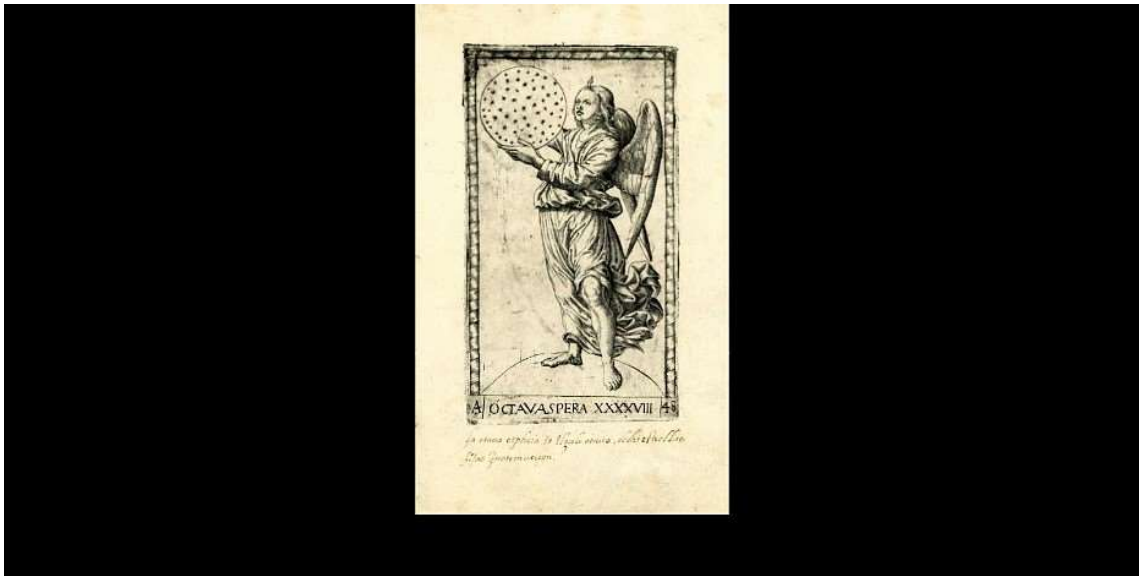


FIGURE 124: ANDREA MANTEGNA, TAROCCHI CARD, c. 1465. PRINT. BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIGURE 125: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE DAYS OF CREATION: THE SIXTH DAY*, 1875-1876. WATERCOLOUR, GOUACHE, SHELL GOLD AND PLATINUM PAINT ON LINEN-COVERED PANEL, 102.3 X 36CM. FOGG MUSEUM, HARVARD.



FIGURE 126: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *KING COPHETUA AND THE BEGGAR MAID*, 1884. OIL ON CANVAS, 293.4 x 135.9CM. TATE.



FIGURE 127: ANDREA MANTEGNA, *MADONNA DELLA VITTORIA*, 1495-6. TEMPERA ON CANVAS, 280 X 166CM. LOUVRE.



FIGURE 128: CARLO CRIVELLI, *THE ANNUNCIATION*, 1486. EGG AND OIL ON CANVAS, 207 X 146.7CM. NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.



FIGURE 129: ANDREA MANTEGNA, *VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH MAGDALEN AND ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST*, c. 1490-1505. TEMPERA ON CANVAS, 139.1 x 116.8CM. NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.



FIGURE 130: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *ARTHUR IN AVALON*, 1881-1898. OIL ON CANVAS, 279 X 650CM. MUSEO DE ARTE DE PONCE, PUERTO RICO.



FIGURE 131: WILLIAM ANGUS AFTER DANIEL DODD, *THE DEATH OF LORD CHATHAM IN THE HOUSE OF PEERS*, 1781. PRINT, 12 x 17.7CM. BRITISH MUSEUM.

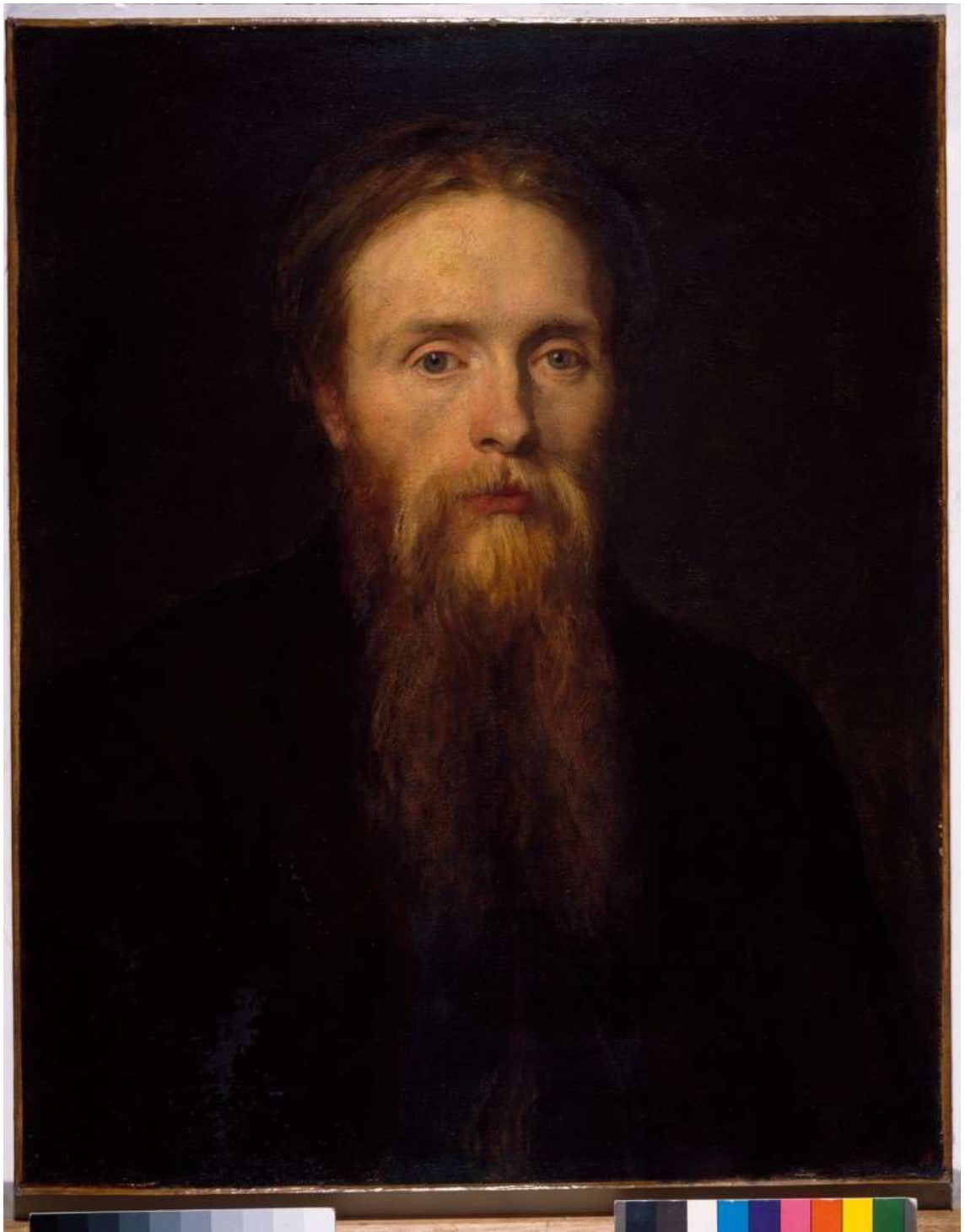


FIGURE 132: GEORGE FREDERIC WATTS, *EDWARD BURNE-JONES*, 1870. OIL ON CANVAS, 25.9 x 20.8CM. BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS TRUST.

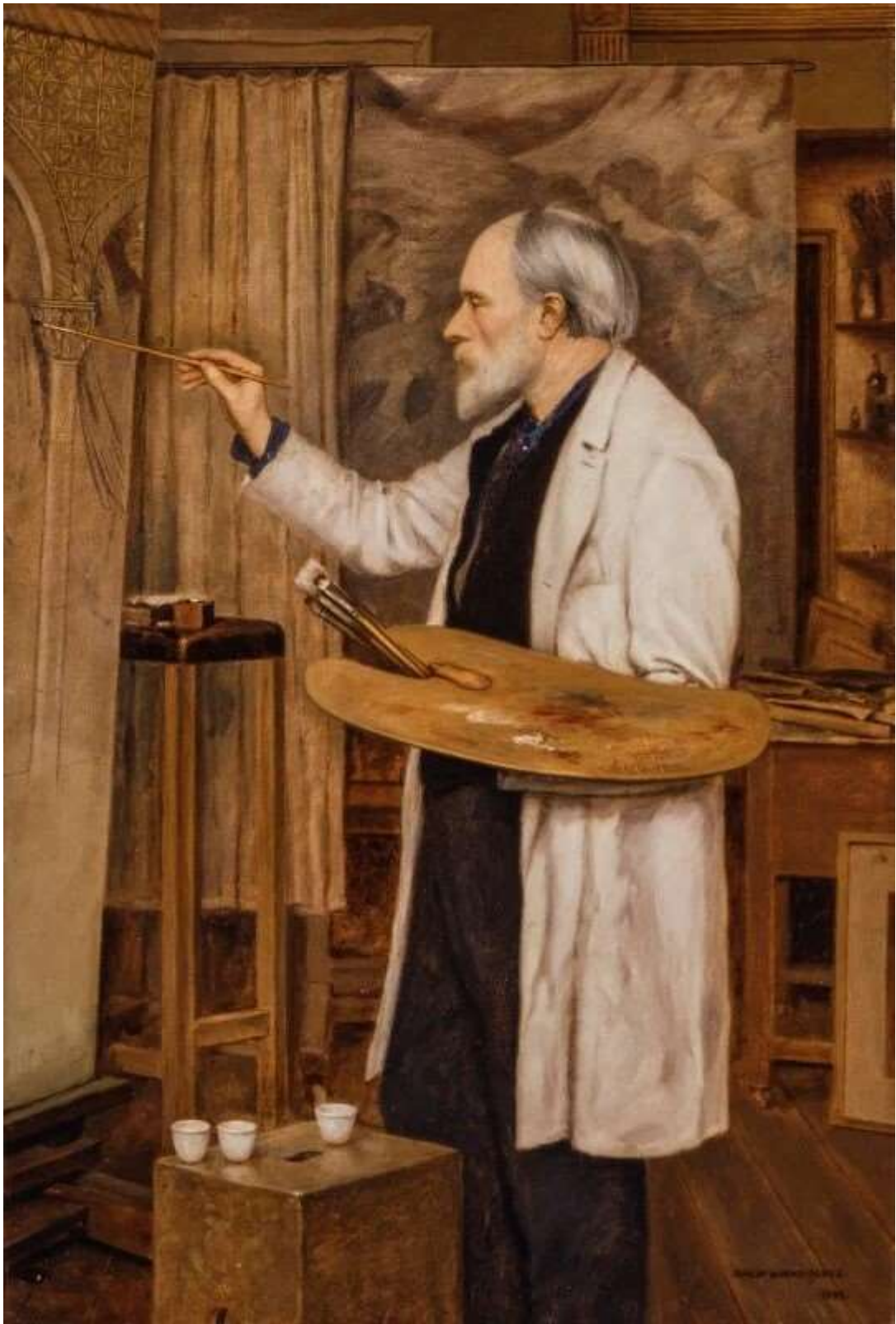


FIGURE 133: PHILIP BURNE-JONES, *SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES*, 1898. OIL ON CANVAS, 76.2 X 52.2CM. NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.



FIGURE 134: FREDERICK HOLLYER, PHOTOGRAPH, EDWARD BURNE-JONES MEMORIAL EXHIBITION 1898-1899.

Photograph, laid on card, showing the west wall of the West Room, New Gallery. From an album of twenty-one photographs taken to record the exhibition. Image courtesy of Peter Nahum (two images from the album of photographs spliced together).



FIGURE 135: HENRY CRAVEN, *ACT IV, KING ARTHUR*. PUBLISHED IN *SOUVENIR OF KING ARTHUR* (LONDON: CASSELL, 1895).

One of thirteen plates illustrating J. Comyns Carr's *King Arthur*. Sets and Costumes designed by Burne-Jones.



FIGURE 136: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA*, 1886. OIL ON CANVAS, 197 X 75CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIGURE 137: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE*, 1883. OIL ON CANVAS, 259 X 151.5CM. MUSÉE D'ORSAY, PARIS.



FIGURE 138: MICHELANGELO, *THE DYING SLAVE* AND *THE REBELLIOUS SLAVE*, BOTH 1513-16. MARBLE, 2.15CM, LOUVRE.



FIGURE 139: LUCA SIGNORELLI, *SAN BRIZIO CHAPEL*, 1499-1502. FRESCOES, ORVIETO CATHEDRAL, ITALY.



FIGURE 140: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *HEAD OF FORTUNE*, 1875-1877. THREE STUDIES IN PENCIL ON PAPER, CENTRE STUDY 25 X 16.5CM, OUTER STUDIES 20 X 16.5CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Sold through Sotheby's, May 2015.



FIGURE 141: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON: PRINCESS SABRA TIED TO THE TREE*, 1866. OIL ON CANVAS, 106.5 x 93.5CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIGURE 142: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON: PRINCESS SABRA LED TO THE DRAGON*, 1866-1890. OIL ON CANVAS, 108 X 96.6CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIGURE 143: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *LAUS VENERIS*, 1873-1878. OIL WITH GOLD PAINT, ON CANVAS, 119.4 x 180.3CM. LAING ART GALLERY.



FIGURE 144: EDWARD BURNE-JONES, *THE MIRROR OF VENUS*, 1877. OIL ON CANVAS, 120 x 200CM. GULBENKIAN MUSEUM.



FIGURE 145: AUGUSTE RODIN WITH MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY, CENTRAL HALL, NEW GALLERY, 1904. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MUSÉE RODIN.

From left to right, seated (as identified by D. Innes): unidentified, John Lavery, Auguste Rodin, Georg Sauter, Albert Ludovici junior. From left to right, standing (as identified by D. Innes): August Neven du Mont, Edmund J. Sullivan, Fritz Thaulow, Joseph Pennell, Edward Walton.



FIGURE 146: AUGUSTE RODIN WITH MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY, WEST ROOM (SOUTH WALL), NEW GALLERY, 1904. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MUSÉE RODIN.

Charles Cottet and J.E. Blanche are joined by the council members listed for Figure 145.



FIGURE 147: GEORGE FREDERIC WATTS, *PHYSICAL ENERGY*, 1902. BRONZE SCULPTURE.

Photograph showing the sculpture on display in the courtyard of the Royal Academy during the Summer Exhibition, May 1904. Image courtesy of Watts Gallery, Surrey.



FIGURE 148: AUGUSTE RODIN, *GATES OF HELL*. BRONZE CAST, 635 X 400CM MADE BY ALEXIS RUDIER IN 1928 FOR THE MUSÉE RODIN COLLECTIONS.



FIGURE 149: UNIDENTIFIED PHOTOGRAPHER, *CONSTANTINE IONIDES'S GALLERY IN HOVE*, c.1890. PHOTOGRAPH. COLLECTION OF JULIA IONIDES, LUDLOW.

Available at <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn16/and-on-rodin-reputation-in-great-britain-neglected-role-of-alphonse-legros>.

The sculpture is now in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, part of the Felton Bequest, 1921.



FIGURE 150: ALBRECHT DÜRER, *MELANCOLIA I*, 1514. ENGRAVING, 24 x 18.5CM. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK.



FIGURE 151: JEAN-BAPTISTE CARPEAUX, *UGOLINO AND HIS SONS*, 1865-7. MARBLE, 197.5 x 149.9 x 110.5CM. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK.

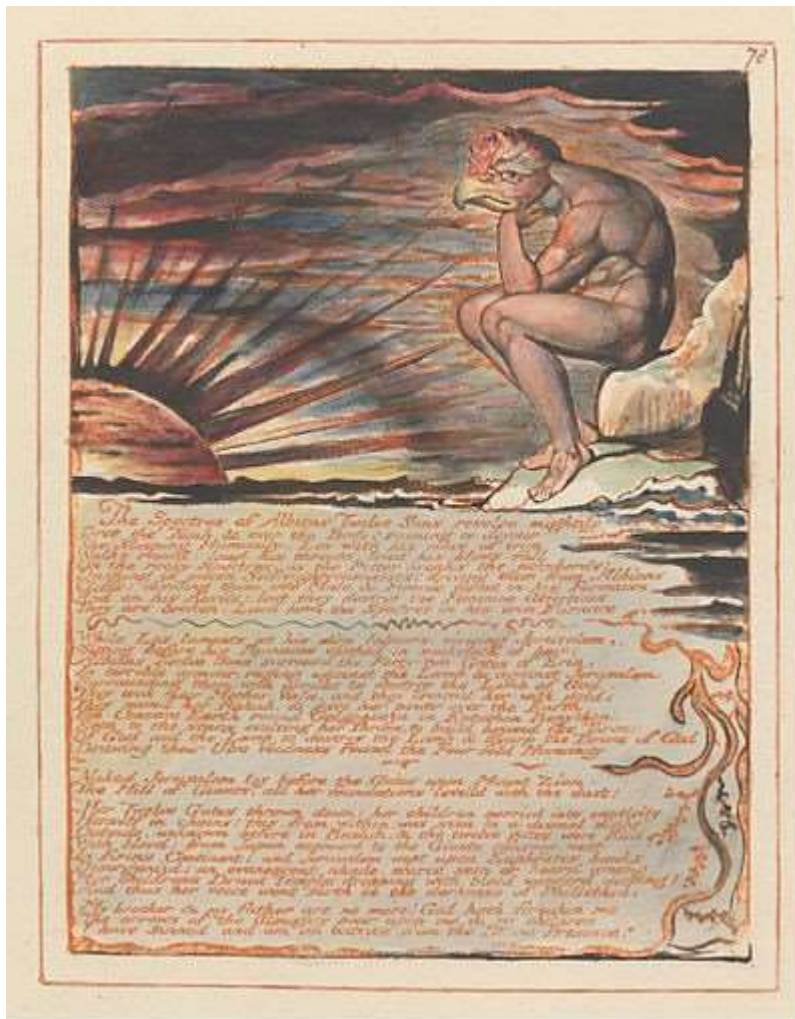


FIGURE 152: WILLIAM BLAKE, PLATE 78 OF *JERUSALEM: THE EMANATION OF THE GIANT ALBION*, 1804-1820. RELIEF ETCHING PRINTED IN ORANGE, 21 x 16.2CM. YALE CENTRE FOR BRITISH ART, PAUL MELLON COLLECTION.



FIGURE 153: MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *IL PENSEROSO*, c. 1520-1525. BRONZE STATUE OF LORENZO DE MEDICI, DUKE OF URBINO. MEDICI CHAPEL, FLORENCE.



FIGURE 154: MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *PROPHET JEREMIAH*, 1508-1512. FRESCO, 390 x 380CM. SISTINE CHAPEL, VATICAN PALACE.



FIGURE 155: APOLLONIUS OF ATHENS, *BELVEDERE TORSO*, EARLY SECOND CENTURY B.C. FRAGMENTARY MARBLE STATUE, 1.59M HIGH. MUSEO PIO-CLEMENTINO, VATICAN MUSEUMS.



FIGURE 156: AUGUSTE RODIN, *LEFT FOOT OF THE THINKER ON A PEDESTAL*, 1903. PLASTER, 144 x 47 x 27CM. MUSÉE RODIN, PARIS.

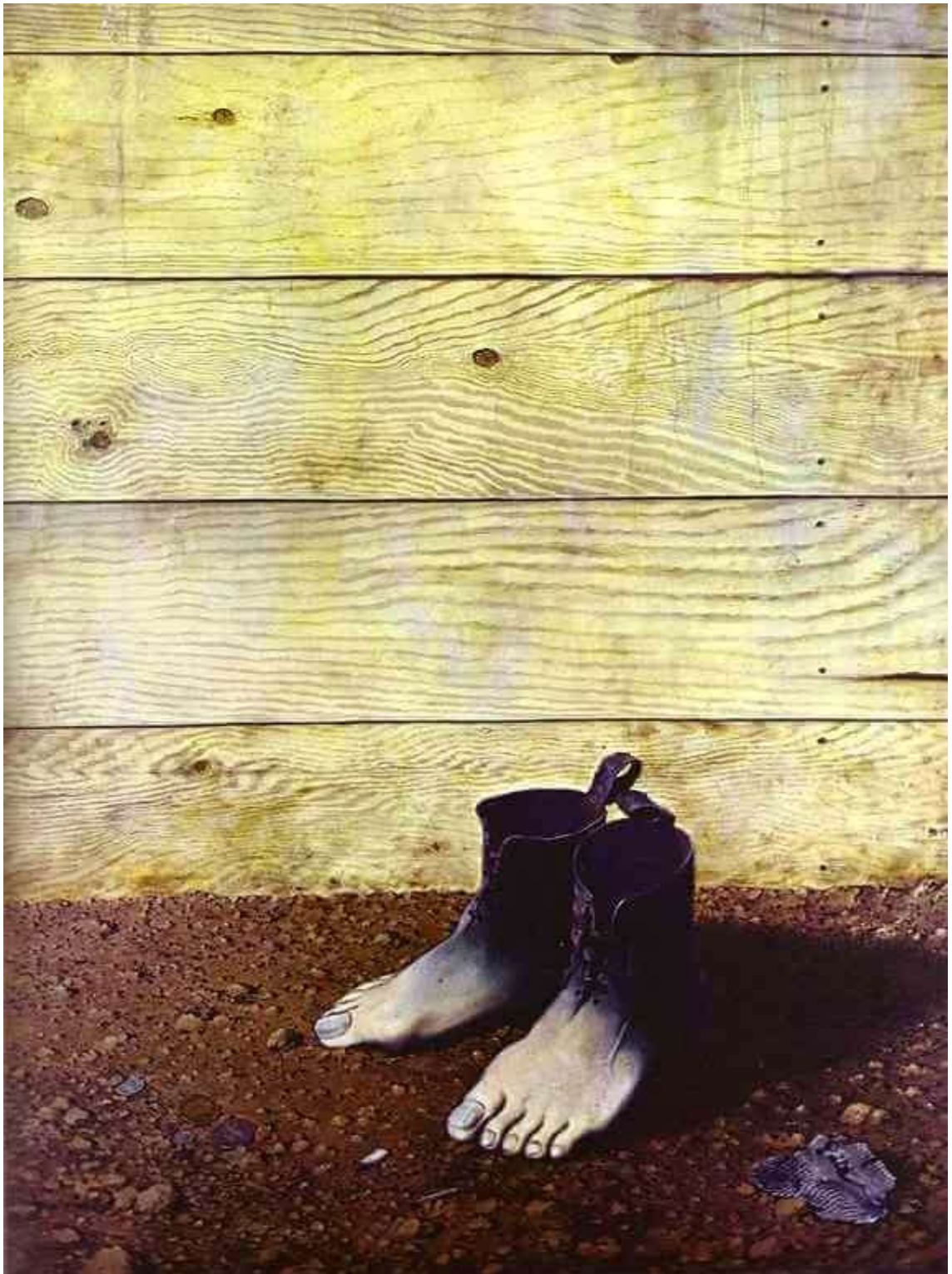


FIGURE 157: RENÉ MAGRITTE, *THE RED MODEL*, 1934. OIL ON CANVAS, 183 X 136CM. MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN, ROTTERDAM.



FIGURE 158: EDVARD MUNCH, *RODIN'S "LE PENSEUR" IN DR. LINDE'S GARDEN*, 1907. OIL ON CANVAS, 78 x 22CM. MUSÉE RODIN, PARIS.



FIGURE 159: CHARLES COTTET, *DEUIL MARIN* (NOW CALLED *MOURNING, BRITTANY*), 1890-1900. OIL ON CANVAS, 121.3 x 160.7CM. CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM.



FIGURE 160: CHARLES RICKETTS, *THE BETRAYAL OF CHRIST*, 1904. OIL ON CANVAS, 89 X 70CM. TULLIE HOUSE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY.



FIGURE 161: WILLIAM STRANG, *SOLITUDE*, 1892. OIL ON CANVAS, DIMENSIONS AND WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN.

Known only from photograph, Witt Collection, Courtauld.



FIGURE 162: CHARLES DE SOUSY RICKETTS, *THE RESURRECTION* (NOW CALLED *THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD*). OIL ON CANVAS, 75 X 62CM. TULLIE HOUSE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY.



FIGURE 163: PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR, *Portrait of Madame M* (now known as *Portrait of Rapha Maitre*), 1871. OIL ON CANVAS, 130 x 83CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Sold at Sotheby's 2004.



FIGURE 164: CHARLES DE SOUSY RICKETTS, *DON JUAN IN HELL*, 1907. NO DIMENSIONS AND KNOWN ONLY FROM A PHOTOGRAPH IN THE WITT COLLECTION, COURTAULD.

Although Ricketts painted several versions of this subject, this particular one was executed after he had designed the stage set for George Bernard Shaw's play *Don Juan in Hell* in 1907 and produced a canvas of the same name.



FIGURE 165: WILLIAM STRANG, *STUDY OF A FEMALE NUDE*, GRAPHITE, 24.1 x 37.4CM. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM.



FIGURE 166: GIORGIO DA CASTELFRANCO (GIORGIONE), *SLEEPING VENUS*, 1508-1510. OIL ON CANVAS, 175 X 180.5CM. GEMÄLDERGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, STAATLICHE KUNSTAMMLINGEN, DRESDEN.



FIGURE 167: DONATO CRETÌ, *NAKED MALE ASLEEP*, 1714-22. OIL ON PAPER, 28.3 X 41.9CM. PRADO.



FIGURE 168: JOHN WILLIAM WATERHOUSE, *SLEEP AND HIS HALF-BROTHER DEATH*, 1874. OIL ON CANVAS, 70 X 91CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.



FIGURE 169: CHARLES DE SOUSY RICKETTS, *CHIMERAS*, 1917-1923. OIL ON CANVAS, 113 X 72CM. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

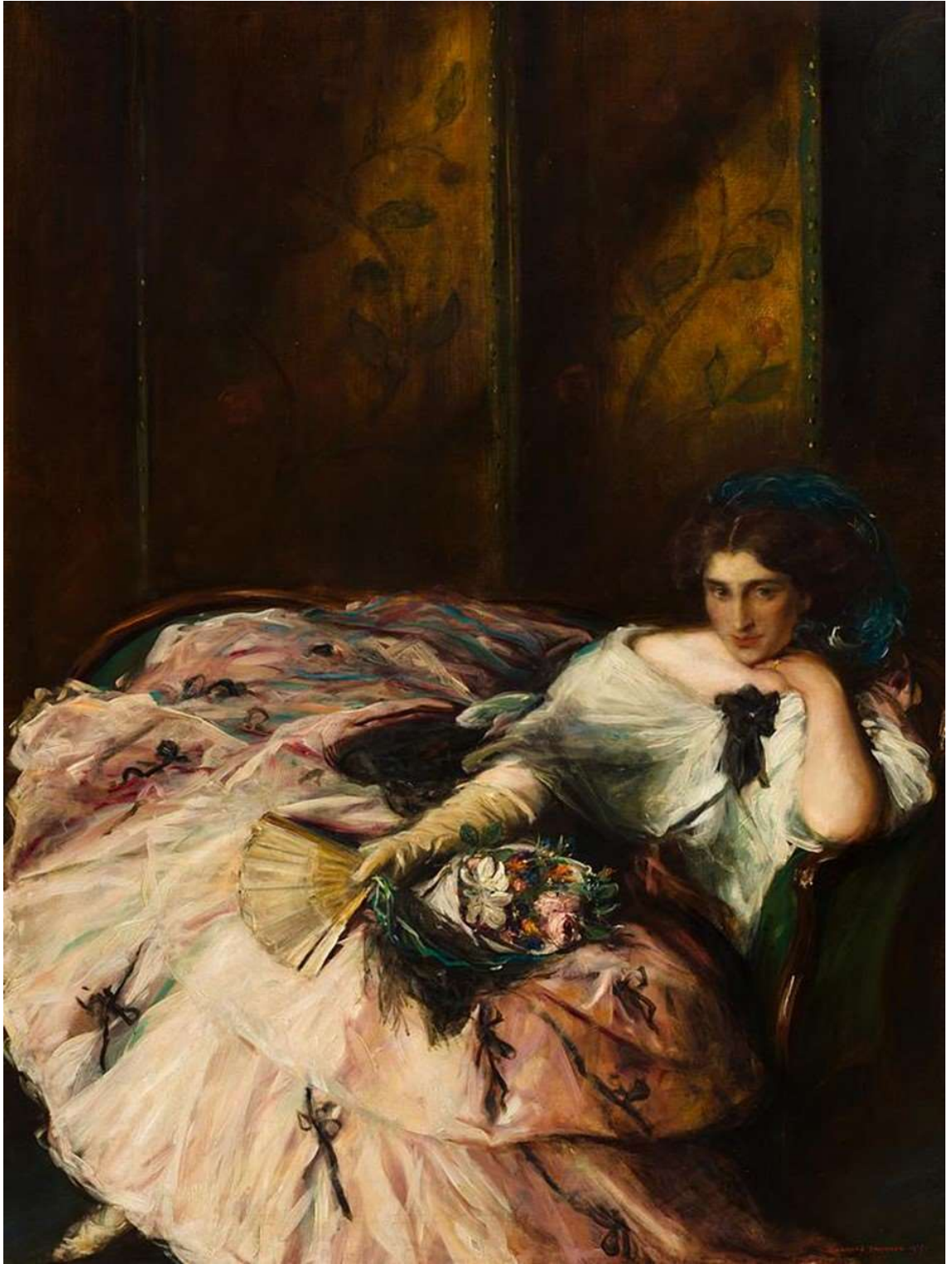


FIGURE 170: CHARLES HASLEWOOD SHANNON, *AFTER THE BALL (MISS KATHLEEN BRUCE)*, 1907. OIL ON CANVAS, 116.8 X 87.2CM. CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART.

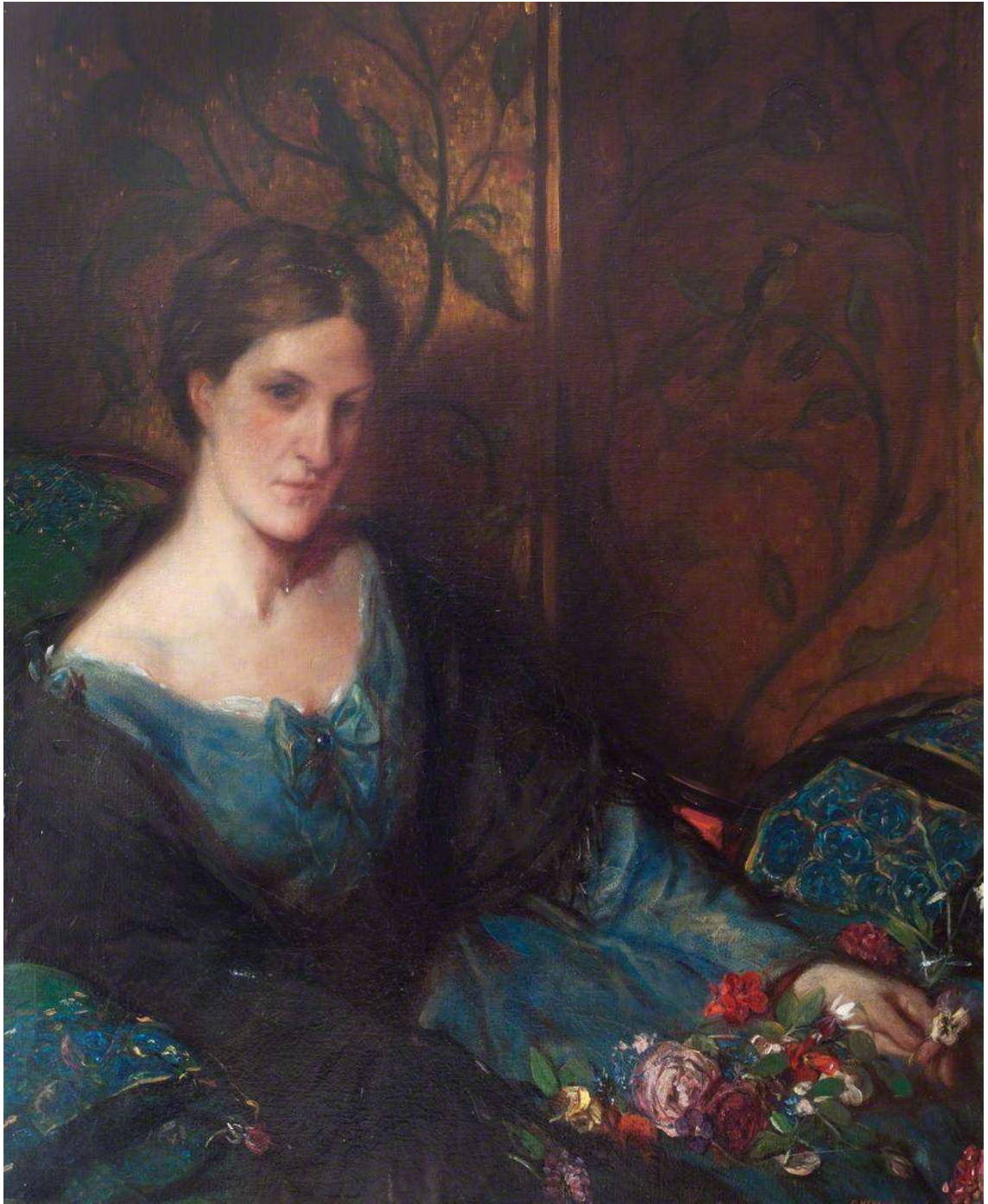


FIGURE 171: CHARLES HASLEWOOD SHANNON, *BARBARA SHORE NIGHTINGALE*, 1906. OIL ON CANVAS, 93 X 89CM. GIRTON COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.



FIGURE 172: CHARLES HASLEWOOD SHANNON, *MIRIAM*, 1918. OIL ON CANVAS, 110.5 x 85.5CM. USHER GALLERY.



FIGURE 173: UNIDENTIFIED ARTIST, *LUCILE ALBUM*, 1905. WATERCOLOUR IN SAMPLE BOOK OF FASHION DESIGNS. VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM.



FIGURE 174: JOHN SINGER SARGENT, *MRS CARL MEYER AND HER CHILDREN*, 1896. OIL ON CANVAS, 201.4 x 134CM. TATE.



FIGURE 175: GIOVANNI BOLDINI, *Mrs LIONEL PHILLIPS*, 1903. OIL ON CANVAS, 193 x 155CM. DUBLIN CITY GALLERY.



FIGURE 176: CHARLES HASLEWOOD SHANNON, *THE FANTASTIC DRESS*, 1890. LITHOGRAPH, NO DIMENSIONS. CLEVELAND ART GALLERY.

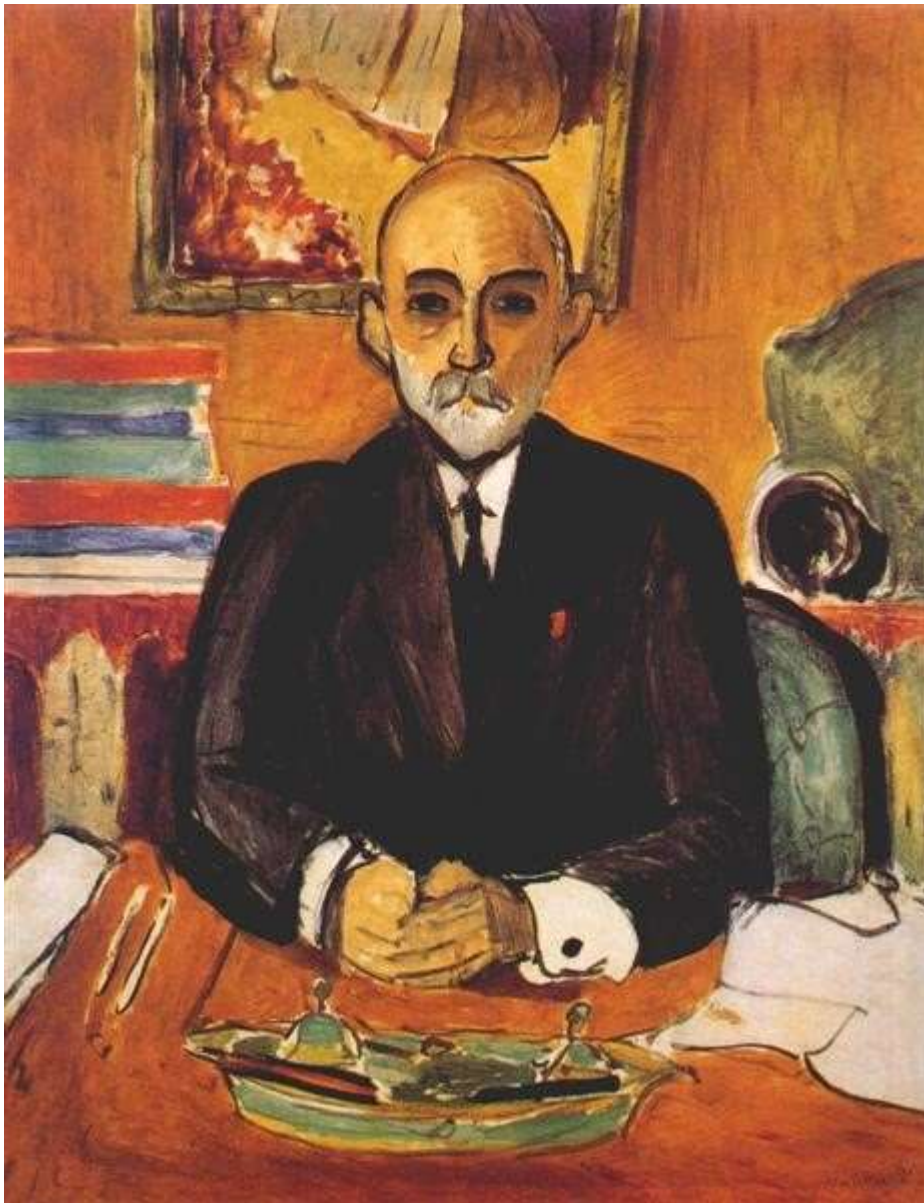


FIGURE 177: HENRI MATISSE, *Portrait of Pellerin (I)*, 1916. OIL ON CANVAS. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

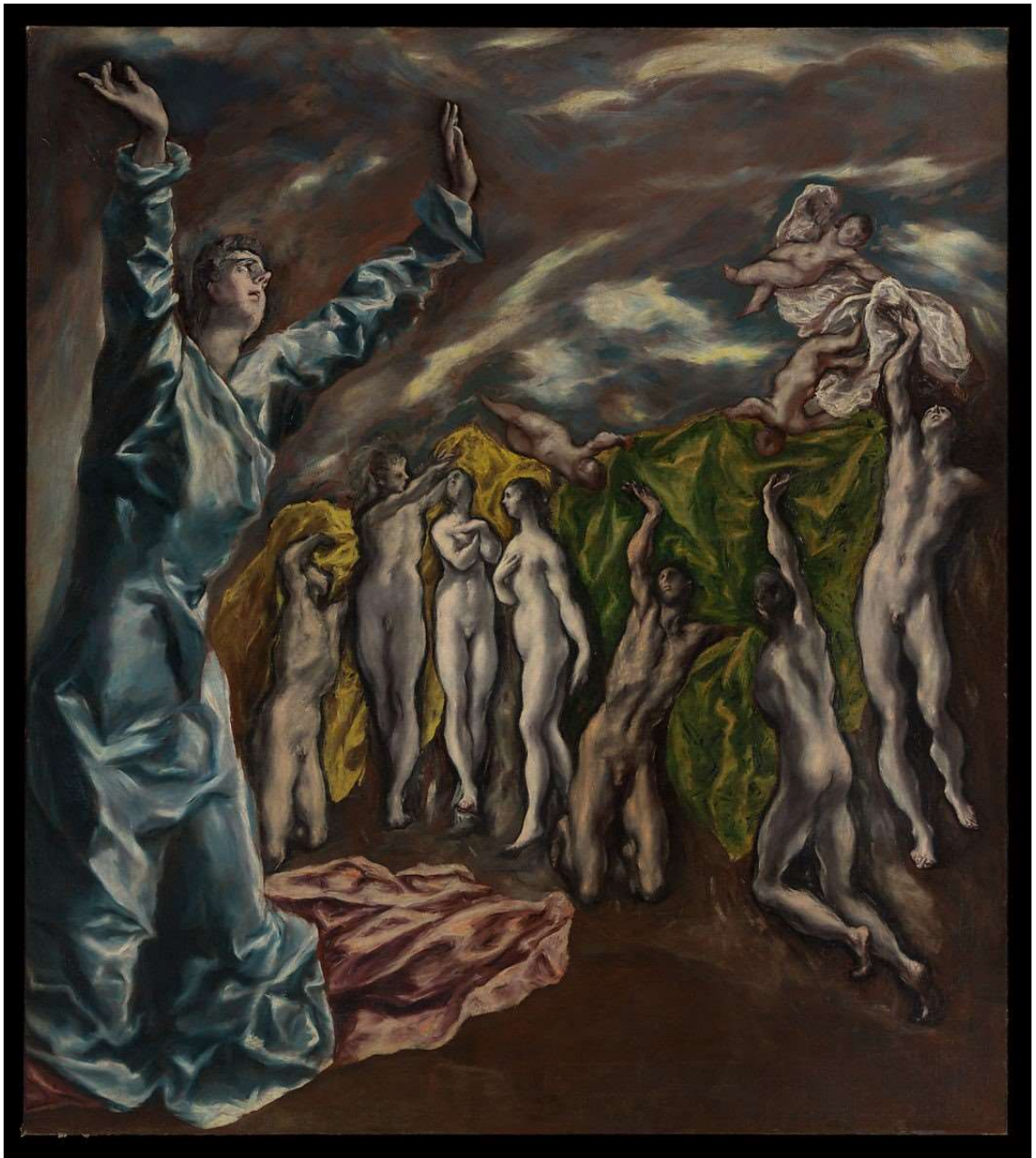


FIGURE 178: EL GRECO (DOMENIKOS THEOTOKOPOULOS), *THE VISION OF ST JOHN*, 1608-1614. OIL ON CANVAS, 222.3 X 193CM. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK.



FIGURE 179: EL GRECO (DOMENIKOS THEOTOKOPOULOS), *CHRIST DRIVING THE MONEY-CHANGERS FROM THE TEMPLE*, c. 1600. OIL ON PANEL, 65 x 83CM. NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON.



FIGURE 180: TITIAN, *DIANA AND ACTAEON*, 1556-1559. OIL ON CANVAS, 184.5 X 202.2CM. NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.



FIGURE 181: TITIAN, *MAN WITH A GLOVE*, c. 1520. OIL ON CANVAS, 100 X 89CM. LOUVRE.



FIGURE 182: NEW GALLERY HOUSE, VIGO STREET. PHOTOGRAPH AVAILABLE AT [HTTPS://WWW.BUILDINGTON.CO.UK/BUILDINGS/8811/ENGLAND/LONDON-W1S/6-VIGO-STREET/NEW-GALLERY-HOUSE.](https://www.buildington.co.uk/buildings/8811/england/london-w1s/6-vigo-street/new-gallery-house)

