



William Morris

1834 ~ 1896

Art in Everything

Exhibition at La Piscine museum in Roubaix from 8 October 2022 to 8 January 2023



William Morris (designer), Jeffrey & Co. (manufacturer), *The Pimpernel*, around 1876. Paris, Museum of Decorative Arts © Les Arts Décoratifs / Jean Tholance

Deeply influenced by its relationship with Great Britain, the town of Roubaix developed a social, economic and cultural model from the early 19th century that was unique within the French landscape. This original identity helped shape the history and personality of the museum, upon which the work of Victor Champier, who ran the museum during the early 20th century, left an indelible imprint.

Given the clear impact of the Arts & Crafts ideals, paying tribute to the man who initiated 'art in everything' and 'art for everyone' was a natural choice. For the duration of an original, British-inspired autumn season, William Morris is La Piscine's guest of honour and exceptional guide. This autumn, we'll be immersing ourselves in all things Morris!

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

1848 was a year of revolution throughout Europe, with popular uprisings and, in the United Kingdom, an industrial revolution that mercilessly destroyed natural sites, former communities and the workers themselves. Intellectuals and artists spoke out against it; Marx and Engels published the *Communist Party Manifesto*. In London, three Royal Academy students, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, began to question the teaching they were receiving. They rejected official art, inspired by the Italian Renaissance, which was very popular with British industrialists. Aiming to rediscover a form of art that was closer to nature, on a quest for ideals and perfection, they took inspiration from Italian and Flemish Primitives, before the time of Raphael (1483-1520). They shared studios and posed for one another. Well before the Impressionists, they headed outdoors to paint in natural surroundings: the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was born. Their favourite sources of inspiration were biblical subjects, the Middle Ages, literature and poetry (Shakespeare, Keats, Browning, etc.). A number of works were signed with the initials 'PRB', for Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, provoking anger in certain circles of British society, where it was imagined

that the three letters hid a blasphemous or mystical meaning. In truth, the idea was to reject, with even greater force, academic painters who signed 'RA' for Royal Academy. In a realistic style, with strong colours, an absence of perspective and a host of details, the first exhibited works received a violent backlash. However, art critic John Ruskin gave them unconditional support from the outset.

In 1854, the Pre-Raphaelites began to go their separate ways: their professional and personal differences had become too great. Nevertheless, their anti-desire to avoid any hierarchy between techniques and the subjects portrayed had an enduring impact on the artists who followed them, including Morris, Burne-Jones and the creators of Arts & Crafts.

They fell into obscurity after World War One but were rediscovered by the 1960s counterculture.

Socialism

William Morris, poet, novelist, painter, architect and publisher, occupies a unique position in the history of British socialism. Initially a romantic, who disdained and rejected an industrial and capitalistic form of modernity, he went on to create a literary and political body of work, from the 1880s, that was

profoundly revolutionary, halfway between anarchism and Marxism. In the first instance, he positioned work at the centre of the material and spiritual lives of human beings, insisting on the need to restore its creative and truly artistic dimension. Next, he explicitly denounced productivism and consumerism as the consequences of a society based on trade war and rampant competition for private gain. A friend of Engels, who is sometimes cited as the first British Marxist, Morris can justifiably be viewed as a pioneer of eco-socialism. He was a strong advocate for the environment and architectural heritage. In many ways, his defence of the land and criticism of the insidious distribution of property anticipated issues raised by ecologists. He became committed to social causes in the 1870s. He spoke out about the harmful consequences of the industrial revolution, like Marx whose reading of capitalism associated the exploitation of man and that of natural resources. Having read Marx, William Morris began taking an active role in movements to emancipate the proletariat. After leaving the *Social Democratic Federation*, which he found too moderate, Morris participated, alongside Eleanor Marx, in establishing the *Socialist League* in 1884. Its positions were openly communist. In the following years, his written works included *Useful Work versus Useless Toil* (1885), *Signs of Change* (1888) and *News*

from Nowhere (1889). He also travelled the country to attend an increasing number of conferences, meetings and demonstrations. He died in 1896, at the age of 62, exhausted “from being William Morris”.

Kelmscott Press

Kelmscott Press was a publishing house, print works and type foundry, established by William Morris, in the Hammersmith district of London in January 1891.

Representing the culmination of his graphic arts career, Kelmscott Press enabled Morris to satisfy the full extent of his aspirations and apply his principles without compromise. The name was taken from the village of Kelmscott, where he rented a manor of the same name between 1871 and his death in 1896. Morris aspired to rediscovering the work of traditional letterpress printers, celebrating manual labour over mechanisation and industrialisation. Within a relatively short period, between 1891 and 1898, Kelmscott Press produced 66 books, inspired by incunabula from the earliest years of printing.

It was a lecture given by Emery Walker on letterpress printing and illustration that awakened William Morris's interest in graphic arts and publishing. Emery

Walker was a book-collector and specialist in printing and engraving, one of the leading forces behind the Arts & Crafts movement, who shared Morris's love of the Middle Ages and socialist ideas. Morris set up three printing presses in his studios. He decorated the borders around the pages himself, as well as designing the ornamental initials and typefaces. Illustrations were provided by his Pre-Raphaelite friends, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Burne-Jones. The linen paper was produced specially for Kelmscott by J. Batchelor & Sons. Most of the books were bound by J. & J. Leighton in London.

Morris was looking for a typeface that would stand out from those generally produced at that time. After studying the fonts used by 15th century printers and engravers, he came up with *Golden Type*. When the rounded, Gothic-style *Troy Type*, that he designed next, proved too large, he produced a smaller version, *Chaucer Type*, to publish the works of Chaucer.

The Story of Cupid and Psyche for *The Earthly Paradise*

The Earthly Paradise by William Morris is an epic poem with a sweeping series of tales, borrowed from various Greek and

Scandinavian myths and legends. Its publication, by F.S. Ellis, began in 1868 and continued until 1870.

The Earthly Paradise was generally well received, one critic even wrote that "it established Morris's reputation as one of the greatest poets of his time".

Morris used the literary device of the frame story: a band of mediaeval wanderers set off in search of a land where life is eternal. After much disillusionment, they discover a surviving colony of Greeks with whom they exchange stories. The poem is divided into twelve sections, each representing one month of the year and containing two tales in verse form, largely inspired by classical mythology and mediaeval legends, including Icelandic sagas. Thus, of the twenty-four stories, twelve are Greek and classical and twelve are mediaeval or romantic. Each pair of stories corresponds to one of the twelve months which follow the natural pattern of the seasons.

The long poem is also carefully divided into twelve books, with separate prologues and epilogues which recount the gradual seasonal changes found in nature. Tolkien's use of frame stories was directly influenced by Morris's poem. In particular, the frame story of the *Legendarium* by Tolkien, based on the travels of Ælfwine the mariner, was inspired by the poem's structure, according to which "the mariners of

Norway, having... heard talk of an earthly paradise, set sail to find it". Morris's "wanderers" reached "A nameless city in a distant sea, / White as the changing walls of *faërie*," where they heard and retold legends such as "The Land East of the Sun and West of the Moon". Tolkien's *Book of Lost Tales II* contains one of the founding poems of the Legendarium which describes the "Wanderer" Earendel in the same way.

Religion

As was the case for many great Victorian writers, including Carlyle, Ruskin, the Brownings and George Eliot, Morris grew up in an evangelical Protestant family and, like them, he abandoned his faith. However, unlike many others, Morris seems to have left his childhood piety calmly behind him without first suffering the angst and spiritual upheaval typical of the Victorian era. Although religious iconography holds an important place in his work, he was equally inspired by nature, poetry and ancient tales. His medievalism, unlike Pugin's, has no place for a renewal of Roman Catholicism or any other faith, and when creating his ideal worlds in fantasies, religion never plays any part. In his mature years, Morris seems to have simply ignored religion and did not follow one of the usual Victorian paths

of becoming an atheist (as Swinburne and Thomson did) or developing his own form of liberal Christianity (like Ruskin and Tennyson). Unlike Swinburne, he never felt the need to profess aggressive atheism.

Queen Guenevere

From the age of four, William Morris was fascinated by the historic novels of Sir Walter Scott, and later by *Le Morte d'Arthur*, a compilation of French and English Arthurian myths by Thomas Malory (1405-1471).

In the patriarchal and Victorian England of 1857, William Morris, a young poet of 23, decided to take on the Arthurian legend. Rather than celebrating the knightly exploits, the writer gave Queen Guenevere a voice for the first time. Retelling one of the most famous episodes in the myth of Camelot, during which the queen is accused of adultery with Lancelot, he places Guenevere at the centre of the narrative, giving her free rein to present her defence alone before a panel of judges: all of them knights, all of them men. The queen sets forth her arguments and defends her love. Through her, William Morris criticised the morals of his era – at a time when women had no voice in the public arena – while celebrating the lovers' passion, female sexuality and unmarried couples. The only painting

that Morris ever completed was *Queen Guenevere* (London, Tate Britain) which he painted that same year. His future wife, Jane Burden, served as his model. Throughout his creative career, he continued to draw Guenevere for tapestry and stained-glass projects.

Kelmscott House

When Morris left Red House in autumn 1865, he moved to Queen Square, in the Bloomsbury district of London with his family. Between 1878 and 1896, he rented Kelmscott House.

A large Georgian house, built in brick, it overlooks the Thames at Hammersmith in West London. Built in around 1785, it became the London home of William Morris and his family. Initially known as The Retreat, Morris renamed it after the village of Kelmscott in Oxfordshire, where he rented Kelmscott Manor as a country house from June 1871.

Nearby, Morris began his “typographical adventure” with his private press, Kelmscott Press, which he set up at 16 Upper Mall in 1891.

Although the building is now a private home, the basement serves as the headquarters of the William Morris Society, whose premises are open to the public on Thursday and Saturday afternoons. Kelmscott Manor, which Jane Morris purchased in 1913, was bequeathed by May Morris to the

University of Oxford upon her death in 1938, on condition that its contents would be preserved and that it would be open to the public. The university passed the manor and grounds on to the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1962. It is now a historic house and museum.

Joan of Arc Kissing the Sword of Deliverance by Rossetti and *The Wheel of Fortune* by Burne-Jones

“Rossetti’s decision, in 1863, to pay homage to Joan of Arc was not based on whim. The heroine of the Hundred Years War embodies absolute devotion to the crown prince Charles and religious zeal. Wearing armour, the young warrior kisses the sword said to have belonged to Charles Martel, which was miraculously rediscovered beneath the altar of the Chapel of Ste-Catherine-de-Fierbois. Kneeling at the foot of a crucifix, she is imploring God to give her the strength to drive the English out of France. The painter’s warm palette (shades of garnet, brown and gold) captivates the spectator, while tight framing focuses their attention on Joan’s resolute expression (further emphasised by her masculine traits: prominent chin and neck). It also, and above all, accentuates the iconic nature of the work: a celebration of faith

(through several clear symbols such as the lily of purity) and the Eternal Feminine (luscious hair and flamboyant mantle).

For his part, Edward Burne-Jones – a disciple of Rossetti’s – evokes Man’s equality before destiny. Chained to a wheel, symbolising tribulations and change, a slave, a king and a poet are the powerless playthings of a towering and indifferent goddess: Fortune. Recalling primitive artists through its emphatic perspective and full of erudite references (the nudes recall Michelangelo’s *Prisoners*), the work was intended as part of a vast Renaissance-inspired polyptych on the fall of Troy. Rossetti, by concentrating on the sensual and fervent kiss of a woman impassioned by the absolute, and Burne-Jones, by revisiting the traditional iconography of Fortune, seem to turn their backs on their own time. Despite their nostalgic atmosphere, the works reveal the seeds of a rebellion against the so-called progress of a capitalistic and materialistic society, progress which is refuted on a daily basis by industrial ugliness and poverty. Although free of anecdote or any direct reference to the present time and despite the pervading atmosphere of legends and bygone eras (mediaeval and classical times respectively), the paintings also invite us to reflect on the high moral value of sincerity (Rossetti) and the vanity of

progress in the face of human suffering (Burne-Jones). With their meaning restored, the Pre-Raphaelite paintings express “the quite noble joy of adding, to pure visual sensualities, the emotion of higher thought” (E. Chesneau, 1882). From the 1880s, they would be echoed in the budding Symbolist movement, full of ideals and transcendent meaning. The painter Kandinsky even saw the Pre-Raphaelites as the forerunners of abstraction: “They are the seekers of the interior in the exterior” (W. Kandinsky, 1912). »

Philippe SAUNIER
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Princess Sabra

This work is part of a decorative ensemble commissioned from Burne-Jones by the watercolourist Myles Birket Foster (1825-1899). It depicts the legend of St George and the dragon, which has been well-known since the Middle Ages: George of Lydda, a Christian nobleman and officer in the Roman army, saves Princess Sabra from the clutches of a dragon. She had been named as the next victim to be offered in sacrifice to the monster. The king, whose daughter has been saved, and his vassals then convert to Christianity. Imbued with knightly ideals, the legend involving England’s future patron saint was a favourite source of inspiration for

the English Pre-Raphaelites. Like many 19th century artists, they were fascinated by the Middle Ages, which they viewed as a highly spiritual era. This work can perhaps be seen as praising faith and ideals as a form of defence against modern, industrial civilisation and the threats posed by machines and the mercantile system. Here, the painter concentrates on Princess Sabra alone. The tall and slender figure of an androgynous young woman is shown against a background of flowers and trees. Reminiscent of a tapestry, it lends the work a decorative appeal.

Arthur Hughes, *The Tryst*

A patron of Rossetti's, Miss Ellen Heaton, commissioned this painting for thirty pounds at the recommendation of the art critic John Ruskin.

The subject is drawn from the narrative poem *Aurora Leigh* (1856) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who was a friend of Ellen Heaton's. Aurora, an orphan brought up by her aunt, hopes to become a poetess. On the morning of her twentieth birthday, she rejects a marriage proposal from her cousin Romney Leigh. She decides to devote herself to her vocation in defiance of Romney, who disparages her poetry and would prefer her to devote herself to his

philanthropic activities. Aurora tells her suitor that what he loves "Is not a woman, Romney, but a cause: You want a helpmate, not a mistress, sir, - A wife to help your ends ... in her no end!".

The painting shows the moment when Romney has been turned down and is on the point of leaving. Aurora is holding a book of her poetry which Romney had found in the garden and mocked. Ellen Heaton and Hughes disagreed about which scene from the poem should be painted. She also wanted Aurora to be shown in a white dress, but the artist was convinced that a sea-green dress would look better against the landscape. Having had difficulties with the composition, he asked Ellen Heaton to "please pay the price of the frame - separate from the thirty guineas for the painting, because it has really taken me far longer than I thought it would". He and his wife, Tryphena, served as models for the two figures.

His patron must have been satisfied with the work because she gave Hughes another commission that same month, although Ruskin was again required to mediate between the two parties during work on the painting.

Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co

The pleasure that Morris, Webb and the other members of their group found in

working together on Red House led to the creation, in 1861, of a furnishing and decorating company at 8 Red Lion Square in London. Going by the name of "Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co, Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals," the associates were as follows: William Morris, P.P. Marshall, Charles Faulkner, Philip Webb, Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The company's rapid expansion led Morris to sell Red House in 1865, only five years after its completion.

From 1875, William Morris assumed sole direction of the company, under the name "Morris & Co".

In the early years, the company benefited from a wave of construction and renovation projects for religious buildings, initiated by the Church of England in the 1850s, supplying stained-glass windows for many churches.

Later, two important secular commissions established the firm's reputation in the late 1860s: a project for St James's Palace and the "green dining room" in the South Kensington Museum, which is now the Victoria and Albert Museum. The dining room, which still exists, has stained glass and panels painted with figures by Burne-Jones, panels with branches of fruit and flowers by Morris, olive branches and a frieze by Philip Webb.

Morris created patterns for wallpaper as early as 1862 and designed his first

pattern specifically for fabric printing around six years later. He decided to use the ancient woodblock printing technique in preference to roller printing.

In June 1881, Morris relocated his workshops from Queen Square in London to an early 18th century silk works, Merton Abbey Mills, near Wimbledon. The property, spanning 28,000m², included several buildings. The different buildings were soon adapted for working on stained glass, textile printing, dyeing and weaving fabrics and carpets.

The tapestry workshop for creating mediaeval-style tapestries was expanded and Morris trained numerous apprentices. From 1883, the workshop wove pieces based on designs by Walter Crane, Philip Webb and Burne-Jones. While Morris pursued other interests, including his political commitment and work on the Kelmscott Press, he delegated creative responsibility to his assistant, John Henry Dearle (1859-1932), who had joined the firm 20 years previously as a salesman and was now designing many of the wallpaper patterns. Morris's daughter, May was named director of the embroidery department in 1885.

Upon Morris's death in 1896, Dearle became art director of the company until his death.

The firm went into liquidation during the early months of the Second World War.

Lady Frances Balfour, née Frances Campbell 1858 – 1931

Frances Campbell was the tenth child of the liberal politician and Scottish peer George Douglas Campbell, the 8th Duke of Argyll. Her family were involved in early anti-slavery campaigns. Frances Balfour advocated for a form of feminism rooted in the concepts of freedom and democracy that she had learned in childhood.

In 1879, she married a Scottish architect, Eustace Balfour, the younger brother of the future Prime Minister Arthur Balfour. They had five children, who they brought up at home in Kensington.

Frances Balfour's first commitments were to social causes. Between 1885 and 1931, she served as president of the Travellers' Aid Society, an association close to the YWCA, which obtained temporary housing for young women seeking work in London.

She became actively involved in the campaign for women's suffrage in 1889. She would soon play a central role in the suffragette movement, within which she was one of the only representatives of the British aristocracy. In addition to voting rights, her priorities included the right to divorce. Her outspoken views earned her a position on the royal commission on divorce and matrimonial causes, which met between 1910 and 1912. She was one of only two women

invited to participate. She also argued in favour of professional equality. Between 1897 and 1918, Balfour served as a member of the executive committee of the brand new National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS). She was president of the London Society of Women's Suffrage, Britain's largest suffrage society, between 1896 and 1919. She was a member of the executive committee of the Women's Municipal Party, which encouraged women to stand for council elections.

Throughout his life, William Morris supported campaigns for equal rights and women's emancipation. He delivered a much-commented-upon oration at the funeral of Jeanne Derooin (1805-1894) the French feminist and socialist who sought refuge in London in 1852.

Sussex Chair

This chair was named after a country chair found in Sussex. Similar types of chair, with imitation bamboo frames and rush seats, were in fashion between 1790 and 1820.

The design of the *Sussex* chair is attributed to Philip Speakman Webb. Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. produced it from 1865.

William Morris and his wife, Jane, used *Sussex* chairs in their first home, Red

House, from 1860, and later in their London residence, Kelmscott House in Hammersmith. Edward Burne-Jones had Sussex chairs in his studio. Items from the Sussex range were supplied for students' bedrooms at Newnham College, Cambridge and for the galleries in Cambridge's Fitzwilliam Museum. The Sussex range was expanded to include corner chairs, children's chairs and armchairs. A full page was devoted to it in the firm's catalogue, in around 1912. Production continued until the company closed its doors in 1940.

Biographies

Ford Madox Brown (1821 – 1895)

Born in Calais, the son of a naval purser, Ford Madox Brown began his studies in 1840 in Paris, where he discovered Delacroix. He did not move to London until 1846, when he married Elizabeth Bromley, English and working-class. He completed his artistic training in Bruges, Ghent and, above all, Antwerp in the studio of Baron Wappers, with strong “Gothicising” tendencies, where he first encountered the work of Flemish Primitives.

Before moving to London, he spent eight months in Rome, where he met the Nazerene painters. Painting “archaistic” religious subjects, these German artists influenced Brown’s artistic conception and technique. He believed that art was under threat from the systematic generalisation of forms and could only be saved by a quest for individual expression.

After moving to London in 1846, he met Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais, the future founders of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. These encounters encouraged him to seek inspiration in 15th century models. Above all, he admired Botticelli, borrowing his tondo format, for example. Brown remained on the fringes of the nascent brotherhood. Nevertheless, he was certainly a member of the artists’ inner circle.

Particularly influential to them, he passed on both religious mysticism and moralising austerity.

In 1861, he took part in establishing “Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co, Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals” with the following associates: William Morris, P.P. Marshall, Charles Faulkner, Philip Webb, Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He created stained-glass windows, furniture, etc.

He also illustrated books for William Morris. Between 1879 and 1893, he created twelve frescoes for Manchester Town Hall illustrating the history of the city.

The subjects ranged from classical antiquity to contemporary social issues in Victorian Britain. His style is characterised by the luminosity of colours and refined details.

Brown’s ongoing interest in the downtrodden underpinned several of his works. Unlike his friend William Morris, he was never a systematic socialist, opting instead for a series of pragmatic and personal interventions in the lives of poor people. He taught art at the Working Men’s College and later established a labour bureau in Manchester. Perhaps this was because, unlike Morris, a rich man of independent means, Brown understood poverty. He had spent at least two decades of his working life harried by a lack of funds.

Sir Edward Burne-Jones (1835 – 1898)

Having lost his mother within a few days of his birth, Edward Burne-Jones was

raised by his father, a framer, in Birmingham. An excellent pupil, particularly in mathematics, he also attracted attention for his drawing talents, sketching caricatures and portraits of his teachers and classmates.

In 1853, he left to study theology at Exeter College, Oxford, where he met William Morris. The two men established a lifelong friendship and consolidated a shared passion for the creative arts. They read and discussed Ruskin, Carlyle, Pugin and Thomas Malory, fuelling their love of mediaeval literature and art. In 1855, they travelled to northern France together, to visit the Gothic cathedrals, and Belgium, where they discovered the Flemish Primitives. On returning to England, Burne-Jones decided to become a painter.

In 1856, he left Oxford without a degree and moved to London. Save for a few lessons from Rossetti, Burne-Jones was self-taught. His first works, inspired by Romantic literature, were pencil or ink drawings and watercolours.

In 1860, he married Georgina McDonald, the sister of a former classmate (and Rudyard Kipling's aunt). He earned a living designing stained glass for several different companies. In 1861, he was one of the founding members of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co and became the company's principal draughtsman.

In 1862, he made a second trip to Italy – which he had first discovered in 1858 – with his wife and the art critic John Ruskin. It was during this period that Burne-Jones began developing his own style, combining elements borrowed

from Rossetti's Pre-Raphaelism, from Classicism and the Italian Primitives.

Burne-Jones earned recognition as a painter, his reputation extending to France, where several of his works were exhibited at the Universal Exhibition of 1878 in Paris. In Belgium, the symbolist, Fernand Khnopff (1858-1921) was a fervent admirer of Burne-Jones.

He continued to work with William Morris, reusing preparatory sketches to decorate tiles, pianos, jewellery, theatre costumes and tapestries.

Recognised as one of the major painters of late Pre-Raphaelism, he was knighted as a baronet by Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone in 1894, which did not go down well with his socialist friend Morris.

In 1895, he created 87 woodcuts to illustrate *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, for William Morris, who was already seriously ill. Published by Kelmscott Press, this masterpiece was the culmination of Morris's vision of the ideal book, embodying his love of literature, mediaeval art and beauty. Burne-Jones likened it to a "pocket cathedral". The first two copies of the book were delivered to Morris and Burne-Jones on 2 June 1896. Morris died four months later, on 3 October 1896.

After the death of Morris, Burne-Jones' own health declined. He died on 17 June 1898. Six days after his death, following an intervention by the Prince of Wales, a funeral ceremony was held for him at Westminster Abbey. It was the first time that an artist had been honoured in this way.

Arthur Gaskin (1862–1928)

Born into a middle-class and artistic background, Gaskin started attending Birmingham School of Art in 1883. There, he met his future wife, Georgina (Georgie) Evelyn Cave French (1866–1934), who would also become his most important collaborator. They founded the “Birmingham Group” which began establishing closer ties to the Arts & Crafts movement, in the early 1890s. The husband-and-wife team created woodcut illustrations for works published by the Kelmscott Press, the printing and publishing house established by William Morris. In parallel to his work as a painter and illustrator, Arthur Gaskin began designing jewellery in 1899. Bridging the gap between Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau, these designs were presented at the sixth show of the “Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society” in 1899. The famous Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths appointed Arthur as director in 1903, and the couple worked there until 1924. In 1917, Arthur Gaskin organised “The New Movement in Art” exhibition within the framework of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists. The exhibition echoed a previous one, held by Roger Fry on the Post-Impressionists, in 1910.

Arthur Hughes (1852 – 1915)

In 1846, he began attending the Somerset House School of Design. His first master was Alfred Stevens. He then

took lessons at the Royal Academy, where he met John Everett Millais, William Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the founders of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. His *Musidora* painting was displayed in the Royal Academy when he was still only 17 years old. A friend of Millais, he posed for a number of his fellow artist’s male figures.

In 1855, Hughes married his favourite model, Tryphena Foord. They had five children together.

At the time of his death in 1915, he was a renowned painter and illustrator, leaving behind some 700 paintings and drawings and over 750 book illustrations. After the death of Tryphena Hughes, in 1921, their daughter Emily had her father’s remaining preparatory sketches destroyed, as well as all his papers and private correspondence.

Annie Swynnerton née Robinson (1844–1933)

Annie Swynnerton was still a teenager when she began selling watercolours to her family’s neighbours in Manchester to earn a little money. From 1871, she took lessons at Manchester School of Art, as did two of her sisters. She obtained a scholarship for her watercolours and a gold medal for oil painting. During her studies, she met the painter Isabel Dacre (1844–1933), with whom she left to train in Rome between 1874 and 1876 and at the Académie Julian in Paris, between 1877 and 1880. During her career, she painted portraits, landscapes and

allegorical or enigmatic figures, playing with light and colour and underpinned by Impressionist leanings, the Pre-Raphaelites – George Frederic Watts (1817-1904) and Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) – and a taste for sculptural nudes. In 1875, A. Robinson, I. Dacre, Emily and Julia Robinson were named as four of the nine “Lady Exhibitors” at the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts, previously closed to women. They were not granted full membership, however, and were not permitted to take life drawing classes. In 1879, they set up the Manchester Society of Women Painters to organise their own classes and exhibitions. In 1884, their wishes were finally granted: Manchester Academy of Fine Arts opened its lessons to women, who were also allowed to become members. In 1889, both I. Dacre and A. Robinson signed the Declaration in Favour of Women’s Suffrage, which boasted two thousand signatories, including one hundred female artists. Burne-Jones provided her with an introduction to the Royal Academy. In 1883, A. Robinson married the sculptor Joseph Swynnerton (1848-1910). For the next thirty years they divided their time between England and Italy. *An Italian Mother and Child*, painted in 1886, bears the hallmarks of the Renaissance. Rome and Tuscany inspired many landscapes, some of which were painted outdoors, as is the case for several portraits. In 1922, supported by George Clausen (1852-1944) and John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), she became the first woman to become an associate member of the Royal Academy of Arts since Mary Moser (1744-1819) and Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807). She died in 1933 and was buried in

the graveyard of St Mary’s Church on Hayling Island, where her epitaph reads: “I have known love and the light of the sun”.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828 – 1882)

The son of an Italian poet, who emigrated to London, Rossetti read the Bible, Shakespeare, Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron and Dante Alighieri at a very early age. His reading would be of major importance to his work. Above all, it was *The Divine Comedy* and *Le Morte d’Arthur*, a poem by Sir Thomas Malory (1405-1471), which formed the basis of Rossetti’s inspiration. He initially planned to become a poet like his father and sister, Christina. However, his interest in mediaeval Italian art encouraged him to apply to the Antique School at the Royal Academy and take painting lessons. There, he met William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais, with whom he established the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848.

His vision of Arthurian and mediaeval legends inspired William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. Neither Burne-Jones nor Morris knew Rossetti at that time, but both were influenced by his work. They met him in 1857. The following summer, Morris and Rossetti launched a commission to decorate the ceiling of the Oxford Union and paint the upper walls with scenes from *Le Morte d’Arthur*. Seven artists were recruited. Rossetti also hired two models, Bessie and Jane Burden. Jane and William

Morris would marry in 1859. Painted far too quickly, the fresco faded over time and is now practically invisible.

In 1861, Rossetti became one of the founders of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. with Morris, Burne-Jones, Ford Madox Brown, Phillip Webb, Charles Faulkner and Peter Paul Marshall. He was involved in designing mirrors and other decorative objects.

In 1862, his wife and model, Elizabeth Siddal, died of an overdose of laudanum after giving birth to a stillborn child. Rossetti was plunged into a deep depression. At the same time, since he had failed to find a publisher for his own poems, he buried them in his wife's grave in Highgate Cemetery. This was also the period during which he painted his finest works.

In 1869, William Morris and Rossetti rented Kelmscott Manor in Oxfordshire. Initially used as a summer home, it became a retreat for Rossetti and Jane Morris who had a hidden and complicated liaison. They spent several summers there, with the Morris children, while William Morris travelled across Iceland between 1871 and 1873. Rossetti's obsession with Jane Morris had a harmful effect on his fragile health, he would "spend his days in a fog of chloral and whisky." He attempted suicide in 1872.

In 1874, Morris completely reorganised the firm and dismissed Rossetti, who left Kelmscott abruptly in July 1874 and never returned. During the last years of his life, he sank into a morbid state. His addiction to chloral hydrate exacerbated his mental health problems.

He died on Easter Sunday in 1882.

His work influenced European Symbolism and the "Aesthetic movement" in Great Britain. Rossetti's work can be characterised by its sensuality and mediaeval revivalism. His poems stand out due to the complex relationship between thoughts and feelings. Poetry and image are closely linked in Rossetti's work. Thus, he often wrote sonnets to accompany his paintings and illustrated several poems by his sister, Christina Rossetti. The artist's private life was deeply linked to his artwork, especially his relationships with his models and muses Elizabeth Siddal, Fanny Cornforth and Jane Burden.

Marianne Stokes, née Marianne Preindlsberger (1855 – 1927)

Born in Graz, in Austria, Marianne Preindlsberger began attending the local Drawing Academy in 1872. There, she met French painter, Max Leenhardt (1853-1941), on a study trip, who encouraged her choice of artistic career. She continued her training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. A scholarship enabled her to take lessons at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon her arrival in France, she was welcomed by her friend Max Leenhardt, who found her accommodation and facilitated access to artistic networks. The young woman painted in Paris and the surrounding area, finding a new source of inspiration in Naturalist works

by Jules Bastien-Lepage and Jean-François Millet. She met the Finnish painter Helene Schjerfbeck (1862-1946), with whom she spent time in Pont-Aven in 1883. During her stay, she became friends with the English painter Adrian Stokes (1854-1935), whom she married in 1884 and followed to England. In 1885, one of her paintings was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts and purchased by the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool. In 1886, Marianne and Adrian Stokes travelled to St Ives in Cornwall and decided to prolong their stay. Marianne produced rustic genre paintings there. That same year, the couple visited another artists' colony in Skagen, in the far north of Denmark. Next, the Stokes lived in various places in England. Marianne regularly exhibited at the Royal Academy, as well as taking part in Chicago's Universal Exhibition in 1893, where she won a medal. In the 1890s, the artist found ever more frequent sources of inspiration in mediaeval, religious and mythological subjects. Her work of that time reveals the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and Art Nouveau. In 1923, Marianne Stokes became a member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours which went on to become the Royal Watercolour Society.

George Frederic Watts (1817 – 1904)

Watts was born in London on 23 February 1817, on the birthday of the composer Handel, after whom he was named. His mother died when he was very young and his father, a modest

piano-maker, gave him a conservative Christian education, from which he would distance himself, as well as a grounding in the classics, including the *Iliad*, which would later influence his art. On discovering the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum at the age of 10, he decided to learn sculpture. By the age of 18, he had started lessons at the Royal Academy.

He attracted public attention with a drawing, *Caractacus*, submitted for a competition to create murals for the new Houses of Parliament at Westminster in 1843. Watts won the first prize at just 26. This success enabled him to travel to Italy, Greece and Constantinople. These trips would inspire him throughout his creative career.

Back in London, in 1848, he met the Pre-Raphaelite painters.

Works painted by Watts during the 1860s show the influence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, with frequent emphasis on sensual pleasure and rich colours. Paintings from this period include a notable portrait of his young wife, the actress Ellen Terry. Thirty years his junior, she and Watts married on 20 February 1864, seven days before her 17th birthday. When she ran off with another man, less than a year into their marriage, Watts was obliged to file for divorce.

The association between Watts, Rossetti and the "Aesthetic movement" dissipated during the 1870s, as Watts' work gradually evolved. It combined classical traditions with a deliberately agitated and indistinct technique, striving to illustrate the dynamic

energies of life and evolution, as well as the transitory and fragile nature of life. Watts hoped to depict the development of the “mythologies of the races” in a far-reaching synthesis of spiritual ideas with modern science, particularly Darwin’s evolutionary theories. These paintings were designed as part of an epic symbolic cycle, entitled the “House of Life”, in which life’s emotions and aspirations would all be represented in a universal symbolic language.

Philip Speakman Webb (1831 – 1915)

A talented and versatile designer, Philip Webb created not only buildings and furniture, but also tableware, tapestries, wallpaper, tiles and stained glass. He is best known as the architect of Red House (1859), a building which established the template for Arts & Crafts architecture.

Webb was a close friend and collaborator of William Morris and one of the most original designers of the Arts & Crafts movement. A trained architect, he was employed as an assistant in the practice run by George Edmund Street, figurehead of the Neo-Gothic movement and the architect behind London’s Royal Courts of Justice. It was there, in 1856, that Webb met William Morris, who had joined the Street firm as a trainee. Two years later, Webb set up his own architecture practice. In 1859, he designed his first and still his most

famous residential building: Red House in Bexleyheath, Kent. The property had been commissioned by Morris as his first home with his new wife, Jane. Working in close collaboration with Morris, who was very keen to recreate the model of a mediaeval-style working community, Webb designed Red House as both a family home and studio-workshop. The original design had to be flexible and easily modified to accommodate the members of the Morris circle. The house was furnished and decorated by Morris’s friends and family, with hangings and embroidery by William and Jane Morris, tiles and wall murals by Edward Burne-Jones, as well as furniture, tiles, metalwork and tableware by Philip Webb. Webb was one of the associates who joined Morris in establishing Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co.

He and Morris “invented” the Arts & Crafts movement and founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in 1877. Alongside Morris, Webb wrote the SPAB Manifesto, a crucial document in the history of building conservation. He attended over 700 meetings of the SPAB committee and carried out many site visits. Webb also joined Morris’s revolutionary Socialist League, becoming its treasurer.

He went on to build some dozen country houses, large London townhouses, a school and church, which were often decorated using elements created by Morris & Co and always in an Arts & Crafts style.

A season of exhibitions to accompany William Morris...

LUKE NEWTON: Un produit de consommation

In his Roubaix-based studio, British visual artist Luke Newton combines both humour and seriousness to offer a unique perspective on a society drastically altered by technological and societal shifts.

HUGO LARUELLE: Le lac aux îles enchantées

Based in the Maison Verte, a stone's throw from the museum, Roubaix artist Hugo Laruelle reveals a harmonious world, taking its origins in the fantasy lands of old paintings or the imaginary world that might just be hiding in the forest or garden.

ODILE LEVIGOUREUX: Les Fruits de la terre

Odile Levigoureux enjoys using complex techniques to transform materials. The exhibition invites spectators to discover a varied, exuberant and hypnotic world, dominated by plants and revealing the artist's taste for Baroque art.

ROUBAIX À L'HEURE ANGLAISE: 1840–1968

During its 19th century expansion, Roubaix had one model in mind, the British textile industry. Oscillating between mutual admiration and fierce competition, the town's entire history is

punctuated by regular dealings with the United Kingdom.

ROUBAIX SAVE THE QUEEN

A wide variety of elements, – paintings, sculptures, ceramics, as well as objects, clothing and fabrics – each represent the United Kingdom a wide variety of elements which paint, in an impressionistic way, an admittedly subjective and partial portrait of British culture and create a visual dialogue with La Piscine's collections.

MARILYN FELTZ: Idylle bohème

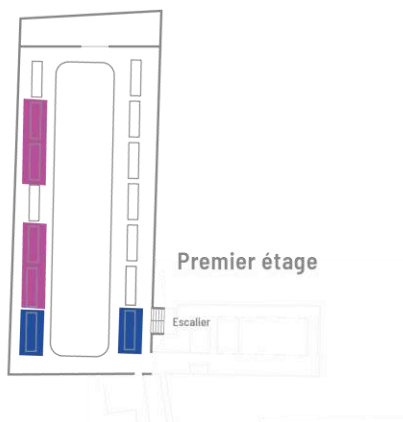
Marilyn Feltz is a young apparel designer who is proud of her label's anti-fashion stance. Perfectly embodying her personality, deceptively classic designs incorporate a savvy blend of inspiration, ranging from Arts & Crafts to club culture, as well as references to Art Deco and Biba.

Belles feuilles & Petits papiers: PAT LE SZA: A piece of nonsense*

In the '*nonsense*' of his collages, Pat le Sza illustrates absurdity and derision, offering an exquisite tribute to English literary culture.



- William Morris : Art in Everything
- Hugo Laruelle : The Water of the Wondrous Isles
- Luke Newton : A Consumer Product
- Roubaix Looks to Britain
- Roubaix Save the Queen
- Odile Levigoureux : Fruits of the Earth
- Pat le Sza : A piece of nonsense
- Marilyn Feltz : Bohemian Idyll



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Curator: Sylvette Botella-Gaudichon

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