

Introduction

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Fig. 1 William Blamire Young, *Untitled [Tennyson and his Friends]*, (c. 1905). Watercolour, gouache and black ink, 59.2 x 108.8 cm. National Gallery of Australia (NGA).

This special issue of the *AJVS* devoted to the theme of *Pre-Raphaelitism in Australasia* is the second of a two-part endeavour that has taken several years to complete. The first part (*AJVS* Vol. 22.2, 2018) focussed to a large extent on the early history of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, as seen through the lens of its individual members and associates whose works were held in art museums and public libraries in Australia and New Zealand. The significant familial, personal and professional ties that existed between these British artists and the distant colonies, and the extent to which they encouraged a lasting Antipodean interest in the movement, was one thread to emerge from this first volume. Another was the importance of decorative art and design—produced by such firms as Morris & Co., and Lyon, Cottier & Co.—in disseminating a Pre-Raphaelite and Arts & Crafts aesthetic throughout Australasia, not only in the form of wallpapers, textiles, and other household furnishings, but also through the medium of stained glass.

This second issue turns its attention to the later years of Pre-Raphaelitism, when the impact of the original revolutionary Brotherhood had gradually developed into a broader Pre-Raphaelite movement, whose many followers and whose varying influences extended beyond Britain's shores to the Continent, to North America and to Australasia.¹ One of the Brotherhood's original triumvirate, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82), played a pivotal role in shaping the tenor of this second generation of Pre-Raphaelitism, both through his choice of subject matter (a preoccupation with sensuous female beauty) and through the circle of younger artists, poets and designers that gathered around him during the 1860s. These included Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98), Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) and William Morris (1834-96), who enthusiastically took up Rossetti's exploration of the interconnectedness of art and poetry, and art and music.² Yet Rossetti's later paintings were rarely displayed, and only came to the general public's attention following his death in 1882,

¹ Susan P. Casteras and Alicia Craig Faxon, eds, *Pre-Raphaelite Art in its European Context*, London, Associated University Presses Inc., 1995; Thomas J. Tobin, *Worldwide Pre-Raphaelitism*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2005; T. Barringer, "A Radical Legacy: The British Pre-Raphaelites and Global Pre-Raphaelitism," eds Linda S. Ferber and Nancy K. Anderson, *The American Pre-Raphaelites, Radical Realists*, Washington, National Gallery of Art, Washington and New Haven, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2019, pp. 19-37.

² E. Prettejohn, *Rossetti and his Circle*, London, Tate Gallery, 1997.

in two great memorial exhibitions held in London the following year.³ Even in the colonies, newspapers carried reports of the sensation provoked by these retrospectives, such as the lengthy review “by a London correspondent” appearing in the Melbourne *Argus* in March 1883, which declared: “The first impression produced by the collection of Rossetti’s works ... is sheer wonder. They are a revelation of something totally new and strange ... the poetry that is in them, though true poetry, is either of the sensuous or of the morbid sort. In supreme loveliness of colouring they cannot, I believe, ever have been far excelled, if at all.”⁴

Even more celebrated than Rossetti, at this time, was his younger associate, Burne-Jones, whose paintings first attracted international attention at the opening exhibition of the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, the fashionable new showcase of the British avant-garde in London.⁵ Burne-Jones’s evocative reworkings of classical myth and Arthurian legend were deliberately decorative and poetic in intent and immediately gained recognition as embodying the Aesthetic movement’s creed of “art for art’s sake.” His works also were increasingly appreciated on the Continent: in Germany, Belgium and especially in France, being prominently featured in the British section of the Expositions Universelle in Paris in 1878 and 1889. At the latter international exhibition, his painting, *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (1884) received a Gold Medal, while he himself was awarded the cross of the Légion d’honneur.⁶

Burne-Jones continued to exhibit in France to great acclaim during the following decade of the 1890s, sending works to the Salons of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1892, 1893, 1895 and 1896.⁷ Several academic studies have considered the circumstances surrounding Burne-Jones’s high reputation in France, particularly within the circle of Symbolist and Decadent writers and artists in Paris.⁸ In her contribution to this issue, Emily Wubben builds upon this recent scholarship to shed light on the important painting by Burne-Jones in the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) depicting one of his most fervent Parisian admirers, his portrait of *Baronne Madeleine Deslandes* (1895-96) (Fig. 1 in Wubben article).⁹ The sitter’s refined features and introspective demeanour are revealed as significant for their similarity to other portraits by Burne-Jones of female friends and family members, reflecting the artist’s overriding concern with his own distinctive ideal of beauty. Wubben also deciphers two

³ Memorial exhibitions of Rossetti’s work were held at the Royal Academy and the Burlington Fine Arts Club in London in the winter of 1882-83. See: Barbara Bryant, “G. F. Watts and the Symbolist Moment,” in *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910*, eds Andrew Wilton and Robert Upstone, exhibition catalogue, London, Tate Gallery Publishing, 1997, pp. 68-71; J. Treuherz, E. Prettejohn and E. Becker, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, exhibition catalogue, London, Thames & Hudson, 2003, pp. 104-08, 113-15.

⁴ From A London Correspondent, “The Winter Exhibition at the Royal Academy,” *Argus*, 24 March 1883, p. 13.

⁵ Colleen Denney, “The role of Sir Coutts Lindsay and the Grosvenor Gallery in the Reception of Pre-Raphaelitism on the Continent,” *Pre-Raphaelite Art in its European Context*, in Casteras and Faxon, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-80.

⁶ Laurence des Cars, “Edward Burne-Jones and France,” *Edward Burne-Jones: Victorian Artist-Dreamer*, eds Stephen Wildman and John Christian, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998, pp. 26-33.

⁷ Des Cars, *ibid.*

⁸ Denny, *op. cit.*; des Cars, *op. cit.*; Philippe Saunier, “Edward Burne-Jones et la France: Madeleine Deslandes, Une Préréphaélite Oubliée,” *Revue de L’Art*, 123, 1999, pp. 57-70; Alison Smith et al, *Burne-Jones*, London, Tate Britain, 2018, pp. 165, 231.

⁹ Edward Burne-Jones, *Baronne Madeleine Deslandes*, 1895-96, oil on canvas, 115.5 x 58.2 cm, National Gallery of Victoria. [Web link](#).

mysterious elements within the Baronne's portrait—the crystal ball in her lap and the background of laurel leaves—and reflects on their iconographic traditions and particular symbolist resonance for contemporary audiences.

The international reputation of Burne-Jones and Rossetti during the final decades of the nineteenth century inevitably shaped a generation of artists—many of them foreign students—resident in Britain and France at that time. For instance, Australian art historian, Juliette Peers, has argued that Melbourne-born artist, George Coates (1869-1930), when studying in London at the turn of the century, was inspired to rework Rossetti's famous *Blessed Damozel* (1875-79) into a modern-day image of *Motherhood* (1903),¹⁰ by adopting “Rossetti's Italian altarpiece format to indicate two different worlds, the earth and the afterlife.”¹¹ The decorative and poetic focus of late Pre-Raphaelitism clearly influenced another Australian artist, Portia Geach (1873-1959), who, on returning from her studies in London and Paris in 1901, exhibited a series of twelve “cabinet pictures” titled *Tales from Tennyson*—including images of *The Lady of Shalott*, *The Lady Ettarre* and *Guinevere* among others—as well as a “splendid decorative scheme ... The Mask of Cupid,” possibly a homage to Burne-Jones's work of the same title.¹²

Only one expatriate Australian artist, however, stood out from his peers in demonstrating a sustained interest in the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, and that was Rupert Bunny (1864-1947).¹³ As Barbara Kane argues in her article in this issue, an evaluation of Bunny's religious works—notably his images of female saints—during the decades of the 1880s and 1890s reveals the influence of several aspects of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic, ranging from facial types and compositional formats to subject matter and shared literary sources. The paintings and decorative works of Edward Burne-Jones were clearly a source of inspiration, but Kane also examines Bunny's interest in Rossetti, especially that artist's early pictures, with their debt to Italian “primitives” like Fra Angelico, which she finds reflected in Bunny's *Ancilla Domini* (c. 1896) (Fig. 15 in Kane article).¹⁴ In this, Bunny was not alone, for a number of British artists had begun to re-evaluate the early intense paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, chiefly the religious images with their blending of mysticism and realism, as can be seen in contemporary works like Frank Cadogan Cowper's *St. Agnes in prison receiving from heaven the shining white garment* (1905) and Edward Frampton's *St. Clare, as Patron saint of Embroidery* (1905).¹⁵

¹⁰ George Coates, *Motherhood*, 1903, oil on canvas, 283.4 x 140 cm, National Gallery of Victoria. Presented by the artist under the terms of the National Gallery of Victoria Travelling Scholarship, 1904. [Web link](#).

¹¹ Juliette Peers, “Pre-Raphaelitism in Colonial Australia,” in Tobin, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

¹² “Miss Portia Geach,” *Table Talk*, 8 May 1902, p. 20. See also: “Miss Portia Geach's Exhibition of Paintings,” *Arena*, 12 January 1901, p. 16; “Art Exhibition,” *Herald* (Melbourne), 2 June 1904, p. 2; “Cabinet Picture, Art Society's Exhibition,” *Evening News* (Sydney), 13 March 1909, p. 10.

¹³ For Bunny's career, see David Thomas, *The Life and Art of Rupert Bunny: a Catalogue Raisonné in Two Volumes*, Port Melbourne, Thames & Hudson Australia, 2017.

¹⁴ Rupert Bunny, *Ancilla Domini* (c. 1896), oil on canvas, 100.3 x 110.4 cm, Art Gallery of South Australia. Interestingly, the Art Gallery of South Australia purchased its first works by Bunny (*Descending Angels*, c. 1897) and by Rossetti (*The Loving Cup*, c. 1867) from London in the same year, 1905. See “South Australia,” *Observer*, 7 January 1905, p. 40.

¹⁵ F. Cadogan Cowper, *St. Agnes in prison receiving from heaven the shining white garment*, tempera on canvas, 74.3 x 45.1 cm, London, Tate, 1905; E. Frampton's *St. Clare, as Patron saint of Embroidery*, 1905, oil on canvas, location unknown. See John Christian, ed., *The Last Romantics, The*



Fig. 2 (left). Edward Burne-Jones, *Perseus and Andromeda* (1876). Oil on canvas, 152.2 x 229 cm. Elder Bequest Fund 1902, AGSA. Image: AGSA.

Of course, artists in Australia and New Zealand did not need to travel to Europe to see physical examples of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. A steady stream of these works of art began to enter the countries' art collections, by purchase or donation, from the late 1880s onwards, with no less than five major oil paintings and several works on paper by Burne-Jones being acquired by the public art galleries of Adelaide, Auckland, Melbourne and Wanganui in the following four decades, including *Perseus and Andromeda* (1876) in 1902 (Fig. 2), *The Wheel of Fortune* (1871-85) in 1909, *The Garden of Pan* (1886-87) in 1918, *The Car of Love, or Love's Wayfaring* (c. 1870-98) in 1924 and the enormous *Fortitude* (c. 1898) in 1926.¹⁶ Copies of famous works were likewise highly valued, with Charles Fairfax Murray's replica of Rossetti's *Proserpine* (date unknown) being accepted into the collection of the NGV in 1905,¹⁷ while a copy of Burne-Jones's *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (1906) was proudly presented to the Bendigo Art Gallery by Melbourne collector William Drummond in 1913 (Fig. 3).¹⁸

It is little wonder, in light of the quality and variety of works available, that a number of local artists and students should become fascinated by later Pre-Raphaelitism in



Fig. 3. J. W. Wilson (after Edward Burne-Jones), *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (1906). Oil on canvas. 161.1 cm x 75.2 cm. Accession number 1913.9. Gift of Mr. W. Drummond, 1913. Bendigo Art Gallery. Photo: Ian Hill.

Romantic Tradition in British Art: Burne-Jones to Stanley Spencer, exhibition catalogue, London, Lund Humphries in association with Barbican Art Gallery, 1989, pp. 27, 99-100, 134.

¹⁶ Anne Kirker and Peter Tomory, *British Paintings 1800-1990 in Australian and New Zealand Public Collections*, Sydney, The Beagle Press, 1997, p. 60.

¹⁷ Edward La Touche Armstrong, *The Book of the Public Library, Museums and National Gallery of Victoria 1856-1906*, Melbourne, Trustees of the Public Library, Museums and National Gallery Melbourne, 1931, p. 92.

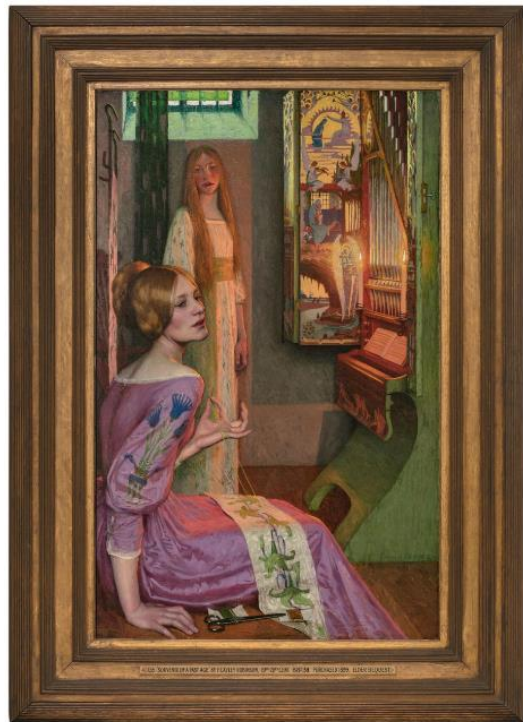
¹⁸ "Bendigo Art Gallery: Monthly Committee Meeting," *Bendigo Advertiser*, 5 August 1913, p. 4. William Drummond of Toorak, Melbourne, donated two "copies from the Tate Gallery": Burne-Jones's *King Cophetua* and John Millais' *The Vale of Rest*. For the original of Fig. 3, see Fig. 6 in the article by Barbara Kane in this issue.

general, and Burne-Jones in particular.¹⁹ One example is the artistic couple, Napier Waller (1893-1972) and Christian Yandell (1894-1954), who explored medieval and mythological themes across a variety of media including watercolour—as in Yandell’s *Perseus and the Graeae* (c. 1922) (Fig. 4) with its a creative adaptation of a scene from Burne-Jones’s *Perseus* series—and linocuts such as Waller’s *The Questing Knight* (1923) or Yandell’s *Morgan le Fay* (c. 1927) that clearly reflect the early twentieth-century revival of interest in Pre-Raphaelite graphic work.²⁰



Fig. 4 (above). Christian Waller, *Perseus and the Graeae* (c. 1922). Painting in brush and watercolour over underdrawing in black pencil, 42.9 x 31.3 cm. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. Purchased 1979.

Fig. 5 (right). F. Cayley Robinson, *Souvenir of a past age* (1895). Oil on canvas, 122.6 x 76.8 cm. Elder Bequest Fund 1899, AGSA. Image: AGSA.



Furthermore, one of the great collaborative endeavours of Waller and Yandell’s married life was the creation of their home on the Fairy Hills estate in Melbourne c. 1922, which has been described as embodying “romantic influences, with its minstrel’s gallery, hand-combed walls in the living room, furniture painted with scenes from Arthurian legends and an art studio.”²¹ Certainly, Waller House came to embody the couple’s aesthetic ideals in a manner very similar to William Morris’s famous Red House.

¹⁹ Evidence of Burne-Jones’s popularity is provided by the “tableaux” inspired by his paintings of *The Briar Maidens* and *Sleeping Beauty* (from the “Briar Rose” series) and *The Mirror of Venus* that were performed at the Women’s Work Exhibition in Melbourne in 1907 to “much admiration.” See “Women’s Work Exhibition,” *Argus*, 23 November 1907, p. 19.

²⁰ For details of these works and Waller and Yandell’s interest in Pre-Raphaelitism, see: Nicholas Draffin, *The Art of M. Napier Waller*, South Melbourne, Sun Books, 1978; Grace Blakeley-Carroll, “Woman of the Sun, Christian Waller,” in Emma Busowsky Cox, *Daughters of the Sun: Christian Waller & Klytie Pate*, exhibition catalogue, Bendigo Art Gallery, 2018, pp. 5-22; Michael K. Organ, “Pre-Raphaelite Wonderland: Christian Yandell’s Alice,” *Antipodes*, 29 (1), 2015, pp. 181-91.

²¹ Grace Blakeley-Carroll, *op. cit.*, p. 8. See also the Waller house [website](#):

Alongside the towering figures of Burne-Jones and Rossetti, younger exponents of the second wave of British Pre-Raphaelitism—especially those who delighted in its more fanciful and imaginative possibilities—were appreciated in Australasia as a distinctive component of contemporary art, and their works were often acquired directly from artists or current exhibitions in Britain. This was the case with *Snowdrop and the Seven Little Men* (1897) by John Dickson Batten (1860-1932), an example of the modern Tempera Revival that was purchased in the same year it was executed by the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW). Similarly, *Souvenir of a past age* (1895) by F. Cayley Robinson (1862-1927) (Fig. 5) was bought from the artist by the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA), while Edward Robert Hughes's *The Princess out of School* (c. 1901) (Fig. 1 in Gaston article) was selected by the NGV from a London exhibition on the advice of the Royal Academy.²²



Fig. 6. Edward Robert Hughes, *The Princess out of School*, 1901. Gouache and watercolour, 52 x 95.3 cm (sheet). National Gallery of Victoria. See [link](#) for information on framing.

This latter work, a large, dramatically-framed watercolour (Fig. 6), in which a poetic theme is rendered meticulously in naturalistic detail, is the focus of Vivien Gaston's article in this issue, "‘New Made of Flower Leaves’: Nature, Evolution and Female Education in Edward Robert Hughes's *The Princess out of School*." Edward Robert Hughes (1851-1914) was the nephew of Arthur Hughes (1832-1915), a close associate of the original Brotherhood, and the younger man's picture is redolent of the early years of the movement in terms of its medieval subject, realistic treatment and sumptuous colour scheme. Yet Gaston also interrogates the contemporary Edwardian context of the image through its evocation of Tennyson's poem, *The Princess* (1847) and uncovers its connections to a range of current debates concerning female education, the natural world and Darwinian evolution.

Combined with the tangible presence of these paintings in local collections, there was also the opportunity—if less frequent—of encountering important examples of Pre-Raphaelitism displayed in the British art sections of the various international and intercolonial exhibitions that came to Australasia from the 1870s onwards.²³ The works of art presented in these great touring shows were, for the most part, rather conservative and academic in character, reflecting the establishment background of the selection panels, as well as their assessment of the preferred taste of the unsophisticated colonial public. It is noteworthy that paintings by John Everett Millais (1829-96) and William Holman Hunt (1827-1910)—members of the original Brotherhood who continued its emphasis on realism and narrative drama in their later work—were more often to be seen in these exhibitions than the poetic and symbolic pictures of the progressive second-generation Pre-Raphaelites. Such was the case with Melbourne's Cen-

²² Laurie Benson (ed.), *Medieval Moderns: the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, exhibition catalogue, Melbourne, NGV, 2015, pp. 38, 109-11, 121.

²³ For a list of international and intercolonial exhibitions touring Australasia during the second half of the nineteenth century, see: "Index of Exhibitions Cited," in *Seize the Day: Exhibitions, Australia and the World*, ed. K. Darian-Smith, R. Gillespie, C. Jordan, and E. Willis, Melbourne, Monash University ePress, 2008, pp. 824-28. Also, State Library of Victoria, *Intercolonial and International exhibitions*, [online research guide](#); Jock Phillips, "Exhibitions and World's Fairs," *Te Ara—the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, 2014. [Web link](#).

ennial Exhibition of 1888-89, which presented Hunt's two great canvases *The Shadow of Death* (1873-74), and *The Scapegoat* (1854-55), and seven paintings by Millais—four portraits, including *William Gladstone* (1879) and *Cardinal Newman* (1881), and three of his subject pictures, *Puss in Boots* (1877), *The Widow's Mite* (1870), and *The Enemy Sowing Tares* (1865)—while Burne-Jones was only represented by three reproductive prints: *Pan and Psyche* (1887), *Flamma Vestalis* (1887), and *A Sibyl* (1887).²⁴

One important exception to the official, more conservative, touring exhibitions was the major display of second-generation Pre-Raphaelite art presented in the Grosvenor Gallery Intercolonial exhibition, which visited Melbourne in 1887.²⁵ Organised by the Grosvenor's proprietor, Sir Coutts Lindsay, this commercial venture comprised works by many of the later movement's leading artists, ranging from Burne-Jones (*The Depths of the Sea*, 1886) and John Melhuish Strudwick (*Circe and Scylla*, c. 1886), to women artists like Evelyn de Morgan (*By the Waters of Babylon we sat down and wept*, 1882) and Marie Spartali Stillman (*Love's Messenger*, c. 1885). Prominent also was the work of older artist, George Frederick Watts (1817-1904), whose great "symbolical" canvases, *Love and Life* (c. 1885) and *Love and Death* (c. 1887), were displayed alongside three portraits from his "Hall of Fame" series of eminent Victorians.²⁶ Watts's reputation had been revitalised a decade earlier by his inclusion in the Grosvenor Gallery's celebrated debut of 1877, where his paintings' expressive forms and mysterious ambience were recognised as sharing the poetry and suggestive power of his younger Pre-Raphaelite associates. Watts's subsequent appearance in the 1878 Universelle Exposition in Paris, alongside Burne-Jones and other Grosvenor Gallery favourites, had reinforced this perception on the Continent and only enhanced his success, as he was awarded a first-class medal by the French authorities.²⁷ In fact, the following decade of the 1880s saw Watts acclaimed internationally as the foremost British artist, with solo retrospectives at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1881, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1884, and the Manchester Royal Jubilee Exhibition in 1887.

Such was Watts's fame that his paintings became a notable feature of the international exhibition circuit. For example, two of his paintings—*Love and Death* (c. 1887), and *Alfred Tennyson* (1858)—were purchased for Melbourne's public art collection following their appearance in the Grosvenor Gallery's Intercolonial Exhibition.²⁸ Two more paintings by Watts were displayed at Adelaide's Jubilee International Exhibition of 1887, and no less than eight works—four poetic-symbolic subjects and four portraits—were a highlight of Melbourne's Centennial International Exhibition of 1888-89, and later travelled to Dunedin as a major feature of the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition of 1889-90. However, the conspicuous presence of Watts's paintings did not necessarily mean universal approbation, as Rebecca Rice reveals in this issue in her detailed examination of their popular reception in Australasia during this period. Focussing on one of Watts's more obscure productions—his *Dedicated to all the Churches* (1875) better known as *The Spirit of Christianity*—Rice explores the role that this painting, and other British works of art on tour, were perceived to

²⁴ J. Lake, *Centennial International Exhibition, Official Guide to the picture galleries, and catalogue of fine arts*, Melbourne, M. L. Hutchinson, 1888, pp. 10, 16-17, 28-29, 48-53. It should be noted that fifteen reproductive prints after Millais's works and two after Hunt were also on display in the "Engravings and Etchings" section.

²⁵ Alison Inglis, "Aestheticism and Empire: The Grosvenor Gallery Intercolonial Exhibition in Melbourne 1887," in Darian-Smith, Gillespie, Jordan, and Willis, *op. cit.*, pp. 589-625.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 602-03.

²⁷ Denny, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-70; Bryant, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-81.

²⁸ Inglis, *op. cit.*, p. 603.

play in the education and civilisation of colonial exhibition visitors.²⁹ In particular, she considers the development of a distinct colonial taste, and what the reception of Watts's painting conveys about the understanding of "High Art" by the "enlightened" versus the "common" viewer.

While some of Watts's symbolist paintings met with incomprehension and even condemnation in New Zealand, it is striking to find several of his major works—two figurative compositions and three portraits (one a copy)—being actively acquired by Australian public collections between 1899 and 1907. One reason behind this enthusiasm was the artist's longstanding friendship to Alfred Tennyson, the recently deceased Poet Laureate, an association that took on heightened local significance in light of the presence in Australia of the poet's son, Hallam, Lord Tennyson, as Governor of South Australia and later Governor-General of Australia from 1899-1902 and 1903-04 respectively.³⁰ In fact, in his first public address as Governor, Hallam Tennyson referred to a portrait by Watts, observing the facts



Fig. 7. G. F. Watts, *Tennyson*, 1890. Oil on canvas, 64.4 x 52 cm. Gift of the Artist, 1901. AGSA. Image: AGSA.

that "my father's character and work are honoured and revered throughout this vast island continent—that one of the best busts of my father by Woolner is in the Melbourne Art Gallery; that one of the best paintings of him by G. F. Watts is in the Sydney Gallery."³¹ While resident in Adelaide, Hallam Tennyson was instrumental in securing another version of Watts's famous *Love and Death* (1901) (Fig. 8 in Rice article) for the AGSA, after being offered the painting by the artist; this, in turn, presumably influenced Watts's gift of his own 1890 portrait of Tennyson to that same Gallery, also in 1901 (Fig. 7).³² Two years later, following his appointment as Governor General, Hallam Tennyson presented another portrait of his father—a copy of Watts's so-called "great moonlight portrait"—to the AGNSW. That Gallery benefitted from one final act of philanthropy linked to this relationship in 1907, when Watts's portrait of *Alice* (1883) was donated by the executors of the artist's estate.³³

²⁹ G. F. Watts, *Dedicated to all the Churches*, retitled *The Spirit of Christianity*, 1873-75, oil on canvas, 273 x 152.4 cm, Tate, London.

³⁰ Audrey Tennyson, *Audrey Tennyson's Vice-Regal days: the Australian Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson to her Mother, Zacynta Boyle 1899-1903*, ed. A. Hasluck, Canberra, National Library of Australia, 1978; Philip Butterss, "The Tennysons in Literary Adelaide," *Australian Literary Studies*, Vol. 30, Issue 3, October 2015, pp. 110-20.

³¹ "The Swearing-In Ceremony, Brilliant Scene, Interesting Address," *South Australian Register*, 11 April 1899, p. 6. In this instance, Tennyson appears to have confused Sydney with Melbourne, as it was the latter gallery that owned Watts's 1858 portrait of Alfred Tennyson, purchased from the artist in 1888, following the Grosvenor Gallery Intercolonial Exhibition in 1887.

³² G. F. Watts, *Love and Death* (1901), oil on canvas, 235.6 x 116.8 cm, AGSA; *Tennyson*, 1890, oil on canvas, 64.4 x 52 cm, Gift of the Artist, 1901, AGSA. Margot Osborne observes that *Love and Death* was purchased at Tennyson's instigation for the sum of £3,000, making it one of the Gallery's "most expensive purchases." The Gallery had already purchased Watts's *A Nymph* (c. 1860s), oil on wooden panel, 64.8 x 52 cm, with the Elder Bequest Fund in 1899. See M. Osborne, "Post-Imperial Perspectives: British Art since 1940 at the Art Gallery of South Australia," PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 2015, pp. 25-26.

³³ Ethel Case, after G. F. Watts, *Lord Tennyson* (c. 1895), oil on canvas, 62.6 x 49.4 cm, Gift of Hallam Lord Tennyson, Governor General of the Commonwealth, 1903, AGNSW. The Gallery notes

Hallam Tennyson's vice-regal activities, including his strong support of the arts, were closely followed by the colonial press, and several local artists were inspired to execute works with poetic Tennysonian themes that proved popular with the public. Sydney Long's (1871-1955) evocation of the poet's line, *Sadder than a single star that sets at twilight in a land of reeds* (1899), was one example,³⁴ as was William Blamire Young's (1862-1935) more literal depiction of *Tennyson and his friends* (c. 1905),³⁵ which shows the Poet Laureate "in his garden, wrapped in his famous cloak," reading his poem "Maud" to his companions.³⁶ A detailed account in *Table Talk* described the scene and identified the listeners as Rossetti, Herschel, Mrs. Rossetti, Carlyle, Mrs. Alfred Tennyson, Darwin, Browning, Longfellow and G. F. Watts, among others. The reviewer added that Watts regarded the poet as "a king, almost a god," citing as evidence the "many portraits of Tennyson Watts painted," including "one of them ... in the Melbourne Gallery."³⁷ A further contemporary reference is provided by the insertion into the composition of "Hallam Tennyson (the poet's elder son, and our Governor-General)" who is depicted as a child, pointing at a globe upon which appears the outline of Australia (Fig. 8). Young's watercolour was exhibited three times in 1905, twice in Melbourne and once in Adelaide, and attracted much attention, but the artist appears to have regretted its specific topicality, for he had dramatically reworked the composition by 1910. Watts and Hallam were among those removed from the scene and replaced by other Pre-Raphaelite luminaries, including Mrs. Morris, William Morris and Burne-Jones (Fig. 1).³⁸



Fig. 8. W. Blamire Young, *Alfred Tennyson reads "Maud" to his friends*, 1905, watercolour (first version), reproduced in *Table Talk*, 16 March 1905, p. 24. Image: Author.

that Watts made "finishing touches" to Case's copy. This discussion of Watts's portraits in Australian collections is indebted to Barbara Bryant's 2014 Ursula Hoff lecture, "Fame and Beauty in Victorian Society: Portraits by George Frederick Watts," presented at the University of Melbourne.

³⁴ Sydney Long, *Sadder than a single star that sets at twilight in a land of reeds* (1899), oil on canvas, 92.7 x 38.7 cm, purchased 1899, AGNSW. [Web link](#).

The title is taken from Tennyson's *Three Sonnets to a Coquette*, 1836.

³⁵ W. Blamire Young, *Untitled [Tennyson and his Friends]* (c. 1905), watercolour, gouache and black ink, 59.2 x 108.8 cm, National Gallery of Australia (NGA).

³⁶ "A Water Colour by Blamire Young," *Table Talk*, 16 March 1905, p. 24.

³⁷ *Ibid.* The article notes that an inscription on the image lists the friends as: "Watts, Lecky, Rossetti, Herschel, Mrs. Rossetti, Towell, Carlyle, Mrs. Alfred Tennyson, Darwin, Hallam Tennyson, Browning and Longfellow."

³⁸ For details of the work's different titles, reworking and exhibition history, see Stephen Marshall, *The Watercolours of Blamire Young*, Rosebery, Meridian, 2013, p. 438; Elly Fink, *The Art of Blamire Young*, Sydney, Golden Press, 1983, pp. 15, 35. See National Gallery of Australia collection [website](#) for the names inscribed in black pencil under each figure of the current version of the image.

I am very grateful to Sarina Noordhuis-Fairfax, Curator, Australian Prints and Drawings, NGA, for providing information on the watercolour's history and condition.

Blamire Young's watercolour was clearly indebted to the photographer Julia Margaret Cameron's book *Alfred, Lord Tennyson and His Friends* (1893), for several of his figures were based on her photographic portraits.³⁹ Her book was one of many produced after the Poet Laureate's death in 1892 that spurred renewed attention to his life and poetry as well as the depiction of his writings by past and contemporary artists and designers. This can be seen in publications like G. S. Layard's study of *Tennyson and his Pre-Raphaelite illustrators*, in 1894, as well as more general texts on mid-Victorian illustration, exemplified by Gleeson White's influential *English Illustration, the Sixties: 1855-1870*, in 1897.⁴⁰ The international revival of interest in this subject resulted in scholar-collectors such as Forrest Reid in England and Percival Serle in Australia donating significant collections of Pre-Raphaelite and "eighteen sixties" illustration to the Ashmolean Museum and NGV respectively.⁴¹ In this issue, collecting in this field in Australasia is shown by Laurie Benson of the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) to have delivered an outstanding compilation of prints, drawings and watercolours by the British artist-illustrator, Charles Samuel Keene (1823-91). Benson selects examples from this collection, which is unrivalled in terms of its size and breadth of content, to describe Keene's career and his place within the nineteenth-century British art world, including his relationship with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The history of the NGV's Keene collection—largely assembled by the Australian artist, Sir Lionel Lindsay (1874-1961)⁴²—and its recent digitisation are also examined.

Works such as those donated to the NGV by Serle and Lindsay reflect a wider trend across Australia and New Zealand, where private collections of Pre-Raphaelite art that had been formed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gradually trickled into public galleries through gifts and bequests. Typical of the many examples available are Moss Davis's gift of Burne-Jones's *Fortitude* (c. 1898) to Auckland Art Gallery in 1926, Arthur Moon's donation of Burne-Jones's *The Fight: St George kills the Dragon VI* (1866) and John Roddam Spencer Stanhope's *Why seek ye the living among the dead?* (1870s-90s) to the AGNSW in 1950, and Eva Gilchrist's bequest of Arthur Hughes's *Fair Rosamund* (1854) to the NGV in 1956. These donations supplemented the continuing purchase of Pre-Raphaelite works by many of these institutions, especially the NGV, AGNSW and AGSA, who had come to regard this formerly under-rated British art movement as a collection strength.⁴³ One result of this ongoing collecting commitment was the curatorial expertise that developed in

³⁹ Julia Margaret Cameron, *Alfred, Lord Tennyson and His Friends*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1893. The watercolour also appears to relate to an obituary Young wrote on "George Frederick Watts: Artist and Seer," *Argus*, 9 July 1904, p. 4, in which he discussed Watts and Tennyson's friendship at some length.

⁴⁰ G. S. Layard, *Tennyson and his Pre-Raphaelite Illustrators*, London, Elliot Stock, 1894. Gleeson White, *English Illustration, the Sixties: 1855-1870*, Westminster, Archibald Constable, 1897. Blamire Young, an illustrator himself and maker of posters, would have been aware of these and others art publications like William Morris's Kelmscott edition of Tennyson's poem, *Maud. A Monodrama*, Hammersmith, Kelmscott Press, 1893.

⁴¹ Forrest Reid, author of *Illustrators of the Sixties*, London, Faber & Gwyer, 1928, presented his collection of Victorian illustration to the Ashmolean Museum in 1946. See Paul Goldman and Brian Taylor (eds), *Retrospective Adventures, Forrest Reid: Author and Collector*, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1998, pp. 25-30. Percival Serle donated a group of Pre-Raphaelite illustrations to the NGV in 1927; his large bequest of Victorian illustrated prints was received by the NGV in 1952. [Web link](#).

⁴² Lionel Lindsay, *Charles Keene. The Artists' Artist*, London, P. & D. Colnaghi, 1934.

⁴³ Sonia Dean, et al, *The Pre-Raphaelites and their Circle in the National Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne, NGV, 1978; Renée Free, *Art Gallery of New South Wales Catalogue of British Paintings*, Sydney, The Gallery, 1987; Christopher Menz, *Morris & Company, Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts & Crafts Movement*, Adelaide, AGSA, 1994.

tandem, which is exemplified by the career of Renée Free, Senior Curator of European and American Art at the AGNSW between 1966 and 1996. Her exceptional acquisitions of major paintings and drawings (by Watts, Leighton, Poynter and Burne-Jones) and ground-breaking exhibitions (including *Victorian Olympians* in 1975 and *Victorian Social Conscience* in 1976) place her at the forefront of the international revival of interest in Victorian art that commenced in the 1960s.⁴⁴

The scholarly and popular re-evaluation of the Pre-Raphaelites in Australasia during the later twentieth century owes much to the remarkable collection of these works formed from the mid-1980s onward by the late John Schaeffer AO, businessman, collector and philanthropist.⁴⁵ Schaeffer has been described as the great competitor of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, another world-renowned collector of Victorian art, and certainly the depth and quality of his collection—especially with respect to Pre-Raphaelite, classical and symbolist works—was of global significance. It is noteworthy that several of the works of art discussed in this issue of the *AJVS* were at one time either part of his collection (Burne-Jones's *Portrait of Baronne Madeleine Deslandes*) or owned by him in another version (Watts's *The Spirit of Christianity*).⁴⁶ John Schaeffer was always very generous in granting curators, academics and students access to his residence in Sydney, and was equally generous in lending works to Australian art museums, where their presence transformed exhibitions into the equivalent of international blockbusters. The very sad news of his death in 2020 brought to an end his important contribution to the history of art collecting in this region, but his life and legacy are wonderfully celebrated in Angus Trumble's obituary, which provides a fitting conclusion to this issue.⁴⁷

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⁴⁴ For details of the works acquired see: Free, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-13, 181, 207. R. Free and N. Draffin, *Victorian Olympians: an exhibition of works in Australian and New Zealand Collections with some loans from overseas*, Sydney, Trustees of the Art Gallery of NSW, 1975; R. Free, *Victorian Social Conscience—an exhibition organized by Renée Free to mark the centenary of the AGNSW*, Sydney, Art Gallery of NSW, 1976.

⁴⁵ Richard Beresford, *Victorian Visions: Pre-Raphaelite and Nineteenth-century Art from the John Schaeffer Collection*, Sydney, Art Gallery of NSW, 2010.

⁴⁶ *The John Schaeffer Collection at Rona*, Christie's auction, Sydney, 15-16 May 2004: <https://www.christies.com/en/auction/the-john-schaeffer-collection-at-rona-19332/>; *Important Art from The John Schaeffer AO Collection*, Smith & Singer auction, Sydney, 29 April 2018: <https://www.smithandsinger.com.au/catalogue/AU0824/>; *The Collection of the Late John Schaeffer AO*, Leonard Joel auction, Sydney, 25 August 2020: https://auctions.leonardjoel.com.au/custom_asp/searchresults.asp?st=D&pg=1&ps=100&sale_no=LJ8381+

⁴⁷ See also tributes to John Schaeffer AO on the University of Sydney's Power Institute website: <https://www.powerpublications.com.au/tribute-to-john-schaeffer/>

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Finally, it is with deep sadness that we acknowledge the recent death of one of our authors, Angus Trumble. We respectfully dedicate this Special Issue of *AJVS* on “Pre-Raphaelitism and Australasia” to his memory as an outstanding scholar, curator and museum director. His contribution to Pre-Raphaelite studies was considerable, as evidenced by the citations to his publications in both special issues—ranging from articles on “Rossetti, Morris and the wombat” to major touring exhibitions such as *Love & Death, Art in the Age of Queen Victoria* and *Edwardian Opulence: British art at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*.⁴⁸ He will be sorely missed by his many friends, colleagues and students.

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⁴⁸ Angus Trumble, “Rossetti, Morris and the Wombat,” *Art and Australia*, vol. 50, no. 1, Spring, 2012, pp. 114-21; Angus Trumble et al., *Love & Death: Art in the Age of Queen Victoria*, Adelaide, Art Gallery of South Australia, 2001; Angus Trumble and Andrea Wolk Rager (eds), *Edwardian Opulence: British Art at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2013.

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