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Introduction

Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) was a painter with an intense desire and love of the mysterious. This manifested itself in his art in various ways and through a variety of subjects. In this article, I shall argue that in the complexity of his vision for the mysterious, it is the precision, clarity, and above all, the superabundance of natural detail that is a significant factor in his creation of works with a sense of suspense and ambiguity—of the supernatural, and, surprisingly, the surreal.

This year, with a profound focus on the anniversary of the great Victorian thinker, John Ruskin, significant attention has been placed on the Pre-Raphaelite, landscape, and generally Naturalist schools of painting that came under his patronage and influence.¹ In some ways, this has convoluted Pre-Raphaelitism and Naturalism in quite general ways, as when American nature painters were labelled the ‘American Pre-Raphaelites’ at the latest show in Washington, D.C.’s National Gallery.² While thought-provoking, it should be recognized that Pre-Raphaelite and Naturalist painting, though both patronized by Ruskin, were quite different expressions of nineteenth century art. Nevertheless, a study of nature remained fundamental for Ruskin and those who followed him, in whatever genre they pursued. Throughout his life and in various ways, John Ruskin explored and expressed his love of nature, most often culminating in his wish that art should accurately and precisely convey naturalistic detail and atmosphere. In his early defence of the Pre-Raphaelites, he declared that in an absence of religious purpose in art, painters should strive to paint with fidelity:

The plants and animals, the natural scenery, and the atmospheric phenomena of every country on earth...suppose that each recess of every mountain chain of Europe had been penetrated, and its rocks drawn with such accuracy that the geologist’s diagram was no longer necessary—suppose that every tree of the forest had been drawn in its noblest aspect, every beast of the field in its savage life...It is most difficult, and worthy of the greatest men’s greatest effort, to render, as it should be rendered, the simplest of the natural features of the earth; but also be it remembered, no man is confined to the simplest, each may look out work for himself where he chooses, and it will be strange if he cannot find something hard enough for him.³

The influence of this way of seeing and art-making can be effectively traced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that followed, and can be situated within productive relation to scientific and technological development.⁴ While, at first glance, the Pre-Raphaelites Ruskin specifically mentored and reviewed, could tend toward the usually heavily ‘medieval’ style of artists before Raphael, Allen Staley and others have argued for the important place of Pre-Raphaelitism in landscape painting, contending that it was ‘as radical’ even as Impressionism in France.⁵ Of all the followers and associates of John Ruskin, Edward Burne-Jones most obviously exemplifies this potential contradiction, seeming the furthest from Ruskin’s call to depict nature. He is not of the style of J.E. Millais or William Holman Hunt, whose piercing social commentaries and archaeological Biblical depictions seem more in tune with Ruskin’s preaching on style and content as related to nature and its depiction. Even the sensuous D.G. Rossetti, with his profusely floral portraits, seems more aligned with Ruskin’s thoughts on nature and beauty. Burne-Jones, who Ruskin heralds as the leader of the ‘Mythic School’, indeed seems worlds away from these genres of Ruskinian naturalist painting.⁶

However, a reconsideration not only of Ruskin's words but also Burne-Jones's works and studies will reveal an underappreciated aspect of Burne-Jones: Burne-Jones the 'Super-Naturalist'. In this article, I will analyse a selection of the many meticulous sketches in which he studies not only wardrobe accessories but also natural life: birds, leaves and flowers. Further, a few of his watercolour sketches extant show nature for its own sake, allowing us a deeper understanding of the role of nature in the conceptualisation and finalisation of his works. My article will conclude by looking at the role of the natural world in major paintings such as *The Merciful Knight*, *Mirror of Venus*, *The Bequiling of Merlin*, and, finally, the 'surreal' present in his major design of the *Tree of Life* for the mosaics of the American Church in Rome. I shall argue that the role of profuse natural detail, often in the most mythical subjects, allows Burne-Jones to create a stranger and more surreal supernatural atmosphere. In and through nature, Edward Burne-Jones opens the way for a painting that is truly 'super-naturalist'.

In John Ruskin's 1884 *Art of England* lectures, he declared that Burne-Jones was a leader of what he called the 'Mythic School of Painting'; with the full knowledge of the whole corpus of 'Greek and Northern myth', he was able to expertly 'harmonise' each of these with 'the loveliest traditions of the Christian legend'.⁷ Ruskin declared to his audience in Oxford that as Oxford men they should be proud, as Burne-Jones was a man who had studied at the university as well. He was an 'indefatigable scholar', and it was this knowledge and these skills that gave him the unique abilities to innovate in the genre of mythical art.

Indeed, Burne-Jones was not a trained artist; he had studied theology with a desire to go up for ministry in the Church of England until the age of twenty-three. First at Birmingham and then at the University of Oxford, Burne-Jones was a devotee of John Henry Newman⁸ and all subjects related to the ancient church 'catholic',⁹ the apostolic succession, and such controversies and debates surrounding the sacraments. While most often called a 'dreamer'¹⁰ and generally underestimated in much of current scholarship, Burne-Jones was expertly versed in the metaphysical, the philosophical, the theological¹¹—the philosophical consideration of the relationship of the natural world to the supernatural heavens. Until the latest stages of his career, Burne-Jones was talking about his love of both the 'mystical' and 'Christmas carol' sides of Christianity,¹² advocating an art that recapitulated the resurrection of Christ.¹³

These fundamental principles influence the whole vision of Burne-Jones's work, from Christian to mythical subjects.¹⁴ How can considering his approach to natural subjects and details enrich an understanding not only of his relation to Ruskin's naturalist vision, but also to the depth and breadth of his creative artistic exploration of the supernatural?

The Birmingham Art Gallery and Museums Collection of Prints and Drawings holds a small example of watercolour landscape sketches made in 1863, at the early stage of his career (Figs. 1-2). These three pictures are lush and green, with empty foregrounds that focus most particularly on skylines of different types of trees. The online catalogue suggests that 'these images are probably as close to the true Pre-Raphaelitism as he ever got in its "truth to nature", being drawn from woods at Cobham, Surrey, while visiting Stanhope.'¹⁵ It is also suggested that these were very much along the lines of Venetian painting, 'owing a strong debt to Giorgione' and may in fact be studies for his major painting, *The Merciful Knight*,¹⁶ which, according to his wife Georgiana, 'summed and sealed' this early stage of his life (Fig. 3).¹⁷ Angela Thirkell, Burne-Jones's granddaughter, said upon presenting these works to the collection that rather than being specifically for *The Merciful Knight*, they were studies for yet another work of that period, the watercolour *Green Summer* of 1864.¹⁸

Other such images are found scattered across the United Kingdom's collections of Burne-Jones drawings—ranging from whole sketchbooks filled with the architectural and natural landscape of Italian cities during his travels in the 1870s (held by the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge)¹⁹ to beautifully studied birds (again, in the Birmingham collections) for his 1877-96 painting of *Love Leading the Pilgrim* (Fig. 4).



Figure 1. Edward Burne-Jones, *Landscape—Study*, 1863, watercolour and gouache with gum arabic, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Collection, 1954P61. Image courtesy of Birmingham Museums Trust.

Are these images then simply incidental studies for either travel records or bigger pictures and larger conceptions, or are they instead a foot-hold providing key insight into what I am here calling his ‘supernaturalist’ approach to his vast and varied array of subjects and materials?

Using these intimately observed studies of nature as a starting point, I believe we as viewers are asked to look closer at Burne-Jones’s major paintings than ever before. Arguably, it is the precision, clarity, arrangement, and above all, the super-abundance of natural detail that gives many of Burne-Jones’s most mysterious works their air of suspense and ambiguity—of the supernatural.

Burne-Jones had an eye for natural detail even from his earliest enterprises. Pen and ink drawings such as *The Wise and Foolish Virgins* (1859) exemplify this, showing how much time he took not only to observe and depict the water below the Foolish virgins, but also details such as a small, barely discernable watching owl and, in the furthest distance of the landscape, a windmill in country landscape. *The Good Shepherd*, one of his earliest stained glass designs, is a further example of the role of landscape in depicting and conveying a subject (Fig. 5). It was highly praised by Ruskin and his mentor at the time, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who said that it showed Christ as a ‘as a real Shepherd, in such a dress as is fit for walking the fields and hills. He carries the lost sheep on His shoulder, and it is chewing some vine leaves which are wound round his hat—a lovely idea, is it not? A loaf and a bottle of wine, the Sacred elements, hang at His girdle; and behind him is a wonderful piece of Gothic landscape.’²⁰

Indeed, already landscape had played an important role for Burne-Jones even before he had begun designing such images; as an undergraduate at the University of Oxford writing for a journal that he, Morris, and five other university students produced and modelled on *The Germ*, Burne-Jones was keenly aware of the role of landscape in conveying the mood and message in an important piece like William Holman Hunt’s *Light of the World*:

...so we are bowed down with awe before the Judge of quick and dead; yet there are signs of comfort, making the God whom we worship, and the Brother whom we love,

one; and these are the crown of thorns budding with new leaves, and the pierced hands;- the perfect God and Perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. And while the heart is bowed downwards yet in silence, filled through and through with its glory, *that wondrously lovely background, earth and sky together*, comes upon one like a soft wind, when the brain is overwrought and fevered: *the orchard, too, and fruit trees, till one remembers the written words of the wise king: 'As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons.'* Have we not seen it many a time, *that strange pale green colour in the sky at night, so bright along the east that we know the day is coming? The stars up in heaven are very bright, piercing through the boughs till they seem to hang like white blossoms among the leaves*, but above the Head is one, very bright and large and dazzling, and we know it for His star that led the wise men westwards, and think perhaps of the time when that star shone above Him, in the lowly stable of Bethlehem [emphasis added].²¹

This observation is fundamentally related to an extraordinary sense of naturalistic detail and its ability to lift the viewer to higher thoughts; natural symbols opening onto supernatural realities of divine history. Arguably, this is the approach Burne-Jones takes not only when he is depicting *The Good Shepherd* in a 'Gothic landscape', which ultimately is a window that is literally a 'light of the world' within the context of church architecture and liturgy, but also the aforementioned painting *The Merciful Knight*. Here, Burne-Jones is depicting a story out of *The Broad Stone of Honour* where author Kenelm Digby recounts the story of a merciful eleventh-century Florentine knight who receives forgiveness from an animated shrine of Christ on Good Friday.²² Digby's works were beloved not only by Burne-Jones²³ but by Ruskin as well, who was said to have 'first learnt to love nobleness' from Digby.²⁴ In depicting Christ becoming animated and forgiving the knight, many of the words about the gesture, stature and role of Christ in *Light of the World* seem to apply.²⁵ The important thing to note for this article is how Burne-Jones picks up and emphasizes the description of nature not only in his ekphrasis of Holman Hunt's *Light of the World*, but also how that remains significant for both his early depictions of Christ in window and painting designs. In *The Merciful Knight*, the composition is made of a patchwork of natural detail, with the architecture of the shrine framing not only the intimate interaction between Christ and the knight but also layers of natural detail. These layers of natural detail are significant for the way they help Burne-Jones to convey and 'withhold' the story. The shrine is raised up to reveal an abundance of golden flowers; these appear at the viewer's eye level and, while allowing access to the composition, separate the viewer from the transaction occurring in the divine and mysterious act of mercy and transformation. The shrine is immediately sheltered by a trellis in the middle ground, overlaid with vines and flowers, and in the furthest background appears the dense rich green wood that may relate to the Birmingham collection 'Venetian' watercolours. These specific details, shown as they are in the soft and glowing layered hues, seem to embody what Burne-Jones had said when he had described how in *The Light of the World*.²⁶ All this scenery that he describes and then paints in great detail Burne-Jones deems fundamental to begin conceiving the greatest mystery to students of Christian theology as he had been: the Word made Flesh in the Incarnation. If this attention and symbolic significance is placed upon natural detail in early works and religious scenes, how can we see it carrying on in his mature and later works of various subjects and scenes?

The Mirror of Venus (1875) and *The Beguiling of Merlin* (1872-7) are two of Burne-Jones's most well-known 'mythic' paintings. They are both mysterious and alluring subjects: in *The Mirror of Venus*, a group of beautiful women are led by Venus to gaze longingly into a reflective pool, and *The Beguiling of Merlin* shows the moment when the sorceress Nimue is casting the wizard Merlin into an enchanted sleep. These are each essentially moments of enchantment: by looking into the water at the behest of Venus, these women enter a form of prolonged enchantment just as Merlin enters his magical slumber under the spell



Figure 2. Edward Burne-Jones, *Landscape—Study*, 1863, watercolour and gouache with gum arabic, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Collection, 1954P60. Image courtesy of Birmingham Museums Trust.



Figure 3. Edward Burne-Jones, *Landscape—Study*, 1863, watercolour and gouache with gum arabic, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Collection, 1954P62. Image courtesy of Birmingham Museums Trust.

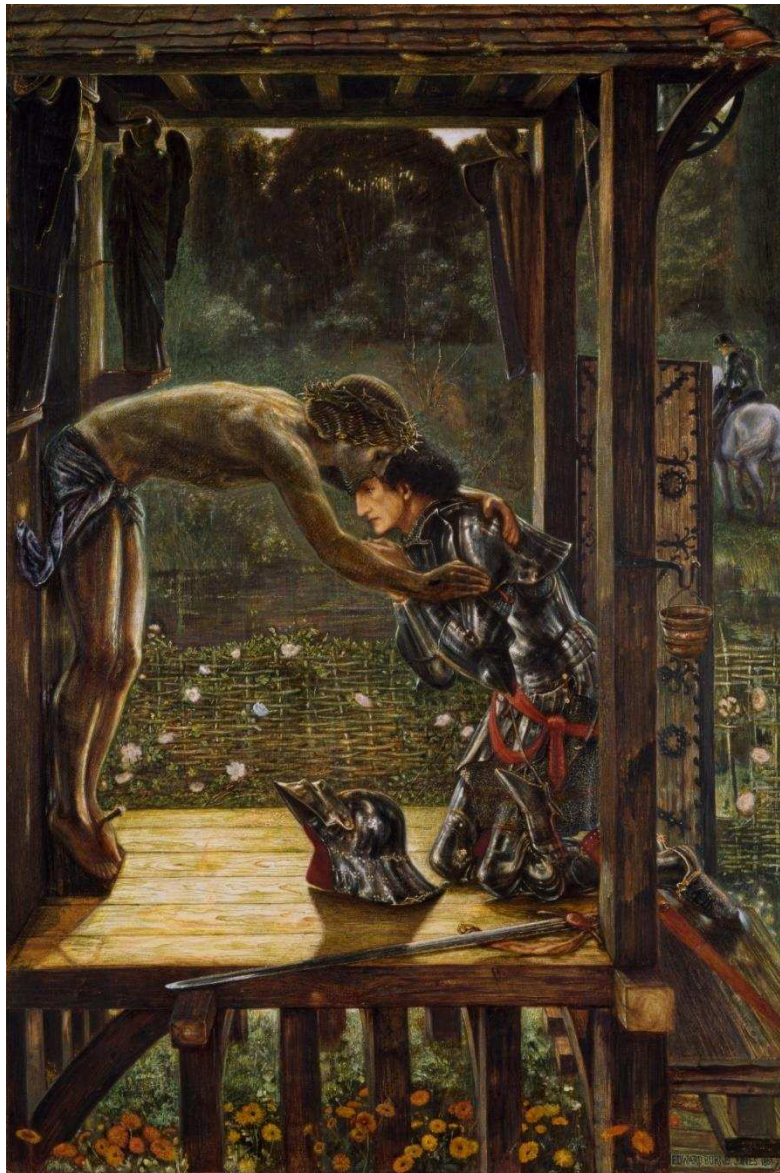


Figure 4. Edward Burne-Jones, *The Merciful Knight*, 1863, watercolour with bodycolour on paper, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Collection, 1973P84. Image courtesy of Birmingham Museums Trust.

of Nimue. In each of these major pictures, both large in scale and meticulously detailed in execution, landscape is important for creating this atmosphere surrounding the moment of enchantment.

When we think about detail and enchantment, *The Beguiling of Merlin* uses natural detail to a dizzying effect; from top to bottom, the fantastic white hawthorn blossoms are shown with equal exactness. With the tree limbs winding through the flowers and grasping tighter and tighter on Merlin, the eye is sent on a spiral that the longer one looks, the more entwined the forms become in their magical exchange. It is this incredible profusion of detail that not only shows the moment of enchantment but makes the viewer a part of that enchanted landscape.

The role of natural detail for enchantment may seem at first less obvious in *The Mirror of Venus*, a painted treatise on female beauty. Burne-Jones labored extensively over the women's gestures, describing their hands and suggesting movement, in delicate sketches for *The Mirror of Venus*. At the same time as composing their forms, however, he was considering how these figures would be set in a landscape. Less

detailed but more elaborate compositional sketches show how Burne-Jones developed the arrangement of the mountains, and a valley space that echoed the shape and movement of the figures in the middle ground. A drawing sold at Sotherby's in 2017 shows this with particular force,²⁷ with the suggested lines of the ridges of the mountains like sweeping waves mimicking the curvature of the forms. The forms and the landscape then become rhythmically harmonious, with even the pond in front literally 'reflected' by the empty space of the valley behind; the figures 'reflecting' the landscape and the landscape reflecting them in turn. While the main reflection we as viewers are looking at in the final painting is the one in the water in which the women are gazing, where we can see their faces more clearly than in the forms themselves, Burne-Jones has heightened this moment of suspended looking by creating this whole series of subtle reflections of reflections in the shape and description of the landscape. Here especially we have a sense of the surreal and 'super-natural.'

Yet another sketch of this drawing reveals that one of the intended titles for this work was 'School of Venus,' thus adding a layer of further complexity in our understanding of this setting and what truly makes it 'surreal'.²⁸ Rather than the philosophers of the famous *School of Athens* of Raphael, Burne-Jones, as a true 'Pre-Raphaelite' (or, in this case, an 'anti-Raphaelite', perhaps), reverses the paradigm completely—perceptively 'vain' women instead of thoughtful philosophers, the wild of nature instead of the elaboration of temple architecture. In this reversal, the natural detail, the surrounding landscape, plays a key role. In its openness, its emptiness, its lack, it creates a space to be paradoxically full—full of a sustained suspense, of a sur-reality that pushes and yet barely contains itself at the very threshold of the image. These mysterious open landscape, lacking temples, lacking definite landmarks in general, actually pushes the subject matter, the reflection of the women through the notional world of the pool, of the painting—the 'matter' of the painting itself, if you will—to the forefront, over the edge and into the world of the beholder. Doing so makes 'surreal' the relationship, first, within the painting between the women and their world, the subject and their surrounding landscape; and second, beyond the painting, between the painting itself and the world to which it is conjoined exteriorly. David Peters Corbett speaks in a similar vein when he recognizes the inherent tension in the creative act of Burne-Jones's painting, describing Burne-Jones's method as an 'elaborate machine of denial'.²⁹ However, I argue that when we take a closer look at the natural detail, which Burne-Jones studied to minutia (as seen in the aforementioned sketches for landscape, birds, and architecture), there is not so much a 'denial' of painting's ability to describe. Instead, I argue that through this type of observation, Burne-Jones advocates art's ability to take the natural world and use it to connect our recognizable world of reality (full of often unobserved natural detail) to the supernatural, to infuse our natural surrounds with the mystery of higher things, to contemplate the surreal aspects of our experience much as one would in theological or philosophical study (the very subjects he himself studied before turning to art as his mode of expression).

Thus, the 'supernatural' and 'surreal' in Burne-Jones's work, though not the same, are both used as tools of expression. While the 'surreal' has some relationship to the notion of distortion and disfiguration—the movement away from clear narrative and figural structures of traditionally conceived arts—I want to conceive surrealism in Burne-Jones as fundamentally related to the world of dreams and enchantment, as seen above in both of these non-religious pictures of the 1870s. This, however, is where the area of 'surreality' both overlaps with and is distinguishable from the supernatural. Dreams have some of their basis in reality and nature, just as the supernatural—the divine and metaphysical contemplations of religious ideas—can only be perceived through symbolic forms of natural reality. Therefore, both of these terms have connotations of rising above—the raising up of the natural and the real worlds. Arguably, it is Burne-Jones's approach as a formatively-trained theologian and experimental artist, that allows him to recognize and harmonize these tools in the expression of higher, mysterious ideas. Reverencing the supernatural and using the potential subversive connotations 'surreal' elements, Burne-Jones can infuse paintings, religious and non-religious both, with a sense mystery inherent to the overabundance of natural details and painting's striving towards capturing it.

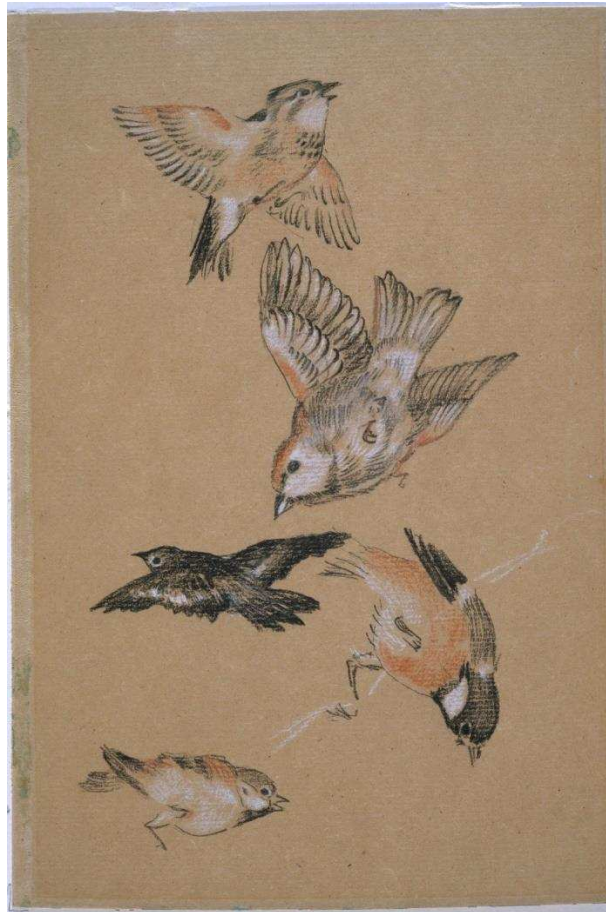


Figure 5. Edward Burne-Jones, *Study of birds for 'Love Leading the Pilgrim'*, 1877-97, black and white chalks with crayon on light brown paper, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Collection, 1927P457. Image courtesy of Birmingham Museums Trust.

Finally, this approach, on a greater and more elaborate scale, comes in his important work for the mosaics of the American Church in Rome. Here, in a specifically religious commission, Burne-Jones is explicitly doing 'everything' he can to make this work 'not a picture'.³⁰ Directly seeking to blur the relationship between the made object (the mosaics) and its architectural context, Burne-Jones relies on the surreal, the supernatural, to create a work that questions the very act of creation itself—not only at the artistic but at the meta-artistic—the divine and metaphysical—levels. In one of the central designs for the work—one of many interlocking designs—the *Tree of Life* stands as his pride the he most often discusses and also most exemplifies the element of the supernatural, the surreal, especially in his works in a Christian context of a Christian, and deeply metaphysical, subject.

In this picture—that is not a picture, as Burne-Jones underlines—Christ is at once crucified and glorified; the cross is present and yet unseen, not actually directly in the image even as Christ is shown in hanging in a cross shape with arms outspread. It is the mystery of the cross—something present in the churches all through England and Europe: the sense that the actual sacrifice on the cross, even when a crucifix or cross is literally present in the art and adornments of both Anglican or Catholic services, is not truly understood in for its deepest mystical effects and metaphysical—supernatural and 'surreal', as it were—consequences. Thus, Burne-Jones has left out the cross, making it more than a picture, more than a crucifixion or cross, even. Doing so allows the very idea of the cross to become more fully understood, more fully one with its external references (in theological, its 'exegetical' relations) and its truest divine

realities—a unified whole with notion of the Redemption that comes as a result of the cross, a cross that is convoluted with the Old Testament, Gospel, and patristic writings on the Tree of Life.³¹

Conclusion

Examples of Burne-Jones's complex use of natural detail could be extended; not only in his major paintings does he devote so much time, precision and effort to nature and its particularities, but even in his many designs for book illustration, rooms, and furnishings. As Ruskin's so-called 'indefatigable scholar', then, Burne-Jones goes above and beyond in the depiction of the natural world. Studying and 'harmonizing' it with any subject in superabundance, Burne-Jones combines the mythical, the religious and the natural in ways that at first seem unexpected and mysterious. However, it is his keen knowledge of the 'supernatural', that as a 'supernaturalist', Edward Burne-Jones executes masterful paintings of heightened suspense and mystery that have and will continue to enchant the audiences of viewers around the world.

¹ *John Ruskin: The Power of Seeing*, Two Templeton Place, London (2019); *John Ruskin: The Art of Wonder*, Millennium Gallery, Sheffield (2019); *The American Pre-Raphaelites: Radical Realists*, National Gallery, Washington D.C. (2019).

² *The American Pre-Raphaelites: Radical Realists*, National Gallery, Washington D.C. (2019).

³ John Ruskin, *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851), 14-16.

⁴ Anne Helmreich, for instance, analyses the relationship of nineteenth century painting to the recording of the natural world in science and photography. *Nature's Truth: Photography, Painting and Science in Victorian Britain* (Pennsylvania State Press, 2016).

⁵ Allen Staley et al., *Pre-Raphaelite Vision: Truth to Nature* (London: Tate Publishers, 2014); Allen Staley, *The Pre-Raphaelite Landscape* 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

⁶ Ruskin, *The Art of England* (1884), 40.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ 'When I was fifteen or sixteen he [Newman] taught me so much I do mind – things that will never be out of me. In an age of sofas and cushions he taught me to be indifferent to comfort, and in an age of materialism he taught me to venture all on the unseen, and this so early that it was well in me when life began, and I was equipped before I went to Oxford with a real good panoply and it has never failed me. So if this world cannot tempt me with money or luxury – and it can't – or anything it has in its trumpery treasure-house, it is most of all because he said it in a way that touched me, not scolding nor forbidding, nor much leading – walking with me a step in front. So he stands to me as a great image or symbol of a man who never stooped, and who put all this world's life in one splendid venture, which he knew as well as you or I might fail, but with a glorious scorn of every thing that was not his dream' (Burne-Jones in Georgiana Burne-Jones, *The Memorials*, vol. 1, 59).

⁹ Burne-Jones, quoted by Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials* vol. 2, 256-7.

¹⁰ For example, in their major book, Stephen Wildman and John Christian call Burne-Jones the 'Victorian Artist-Dreamer' (Stephen Wildman and John Christian. *Edward Burne-Jones: Victorian Artist-Dreamer*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998).

¹¹ For example, he has distinct memories of early reading and a continued devotion to the theologian, Thomas Aquinas. For him, Aquinas was 'a very great man, a very great man, and in the ancient Church he is important still... I read through the greater part of him when I was young, I found him exceedingly interesting. I loved dogmatic theology when I was young' (Burne-Jones to Thomas Rooke, *Memoirs of Thomas Matthews Rooke: typescript: or Notes of conversations among the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, 1890-1899 MS.L.7-1988*, National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, 65-6).

¹² 'There are only two sides of Christianity for which I am fitted by the Spirit that designs me – the carol part and the mystical part. I could not do without medieval Christianity. The central idea of it and all it has gathered to itself made the Europe that I exist in. The enthusiasm and devotion, the learning and the art, the humanity and the romance, the self-denial and splendid achievement that the human race can never be

deprived of, expect by a cataclysm, that would all but destroy man himself – all belong to it' (Burne-Jones, quoted by Georgiana Burne-Jones in *Memorials*, vol. 2., 159).

¹³ 'That was an awful thought of Ruskins, that artists paint God for the world. There's a lump of greasy pigment at the end of Michael Angelo's hog-bristle brush, and by the time it has been laid on the stucco, there is something there that all men with eyes recognize as divine. Think of what it means. It is the power of bringing God into the world – making God manifest. It is giving back her Child that was crucified to Our Lady of Sorrows' (Burne-Jones to. Dr. Sebastian Evans, quoted by Georgiana Burne-Jones in *Memorials* vol. 2, 257).

¹⁴ This I explore in my current PhD dissertation, 'Love Between Worlds: Edward Burne-Jones and the Theology of Art'.

¹⁵ 'Landscape – Study' *Pre-Raphaelite Online Resource* www.preraphaelites.org/the-collection/1954p61/landscape-study/ accessed 1 April 2019.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Georgiana Burne-Jones, *The Memorials* vol. 1, 262.

¹⁸ 'Landscape – Study'.

¹⁹ See, for example, 'View down a city street; sketch of a figure (sculpture?) of a woman (Roman?) Detailed sketch of the buildings facing a narrow street' *The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge* webapps.fitzmuesum.cam.ac.uk/explorer/index.php?qu=ProductionSchool:britishANDMaker:Burne-Jones&oid+82299 accessed 1 April 2019.

²⁰ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, quoted in Stephen Wildman and John Christian. *Edward Burne-Jones: Victorian Artist-Dreamer* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), 56-7.

²¹ Burne-Jones, 'Mr. Ruskin's New Volume,' *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (April 1856) 223-224. *The Rossetti Archive*, <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/ap4.o93.1.April.rad.html#p212> accessed 1 September 2016.

²² Mordaunt Crook, *William Burges and the High Victorian Dream* (London: John Murray Ltd, 1981), 20.

²³ Though he downplayed Digby's books as 'sillyish books both,' Georgiana recounted that he kept them 'in his own room, close to his hand, and often dipped into in wakeful nights or early mornings.' 'I can't help it,' he had said. 'I like them' (*Memorials*, vol. 2, 56).

²⁴ Ruskin, quoted by Crook, 21.

²⁵ I discuss this more in Chapter 3 of my PhD dissertation.

²⁶ See above, *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*.

²⁷ 'Victorian, Pre-Raphaelite and British Impressionist Art' *Sotherby's* 13 July 2017

<http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2017/victorian-pre-raphaelite-british-impressionist-art-117132/lot.3.html> accessed 10 May 2019.

²⁸ 'Study for the Mirror of Venus,' Tate Britain Prints and Drawings Room, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/burne-jones-study-for-the-mirror-of-venus-n04350> accessed 1 February 2016.

²⁹ David Peters Corbett, *The World in Paint: Modern Art and Visuality in England, 1848-1914* (London, 2004), 68; 70; 81.

³⁰ *Memorials* vol. 2, 159.

³¹ Scriptural references include: Genesis 2:9; Proverbs 3:18, 11:30, 13:12, 15:4; John 15; Revelation 2:7, 22:2, 14, 19. These were discussed by patristic writers of the ancient church that Burne-Jones studied including: St. Ignatius of Antioch, quoted by Wilberforce, *The Holy Eucharist*, 102; St. Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*. trans. Ewert Cousins (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1978); Augustine of Hippo, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, VIII, 4, 8 (On Genesis, New City Press, p. 351-353). Various cultural references are discussed by: Eliezer Shore, 'The Tree at the Heart of the Garden', *Parabola: The Tree of Life* 14, no. 3 (New York, August 1989), 39; *The Poetic Edda*, trans. Lee M. Hollander 2nd ed, rev (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 2;4;10;60; Paul Jordan-Smith, 'The Serpent and the Eagle' *Parabola: The Tree of Life* 14, no. 3 (New York, August 1989), 64-71; Rene Guenon, *Symbols of Sacred Science*. Trans. Henry D. Fohr. Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004.