

J.W. Waterhouse by Peter Trippi. London and New York: Phaidon, 2002. 240 pp. + 200 colour plates, 20 b/w illus. ISBN 071484232X. \$49.95.

This oversized monograph with its mouth-watering reproductions is timely, well-researched, and comprehensive. Peter Trippi focusses on the paintings and drawings, given the scant archival biographical documentation that Waterhouse left, and turns this necessity into the book's virtue. Trippi offers a view of Victorian painting, including studio practice and technique, and addresses Waterhouse's tremendous popularity that continues into the twenty-first century. He places Waterhouse within overlapping Victorian, modernist, and Pre-Raphaelite artistic circles to reveal an artist who is more complex than we might suppose. Waterhouse's commercial and populist motives did not overtake his meticulous techniques. He was eclectic yet original, Victorian but influenced by Impressionism, and British in subject matter but Frenchified in techniques of facture, brushwork, impasto, and incompleteness.

Trippi embeds the trajectory of Waterhouse's career within contemporary Victorian exhibition and dealer practices, sales, prices, and parallel academic and avant-garde tastes that Waterhouse's paintings often bridged. He compares him to Brotherhood artists and to Burne-Jones within the widening definitions of Pre-Raphaelitism that blurred into Aestheticism. Waterhouse's art touched the work of G.F. Watts, Albert Moore, and Frederic Leighton, and the classicism of Lawrence Alma-Tadema, who had a profound influence on Waterhouse.

The first chapter is biographical with a focus on Italian and classical subjects in Waterhouse's early work. Born to two artist parents in Rome in 1849 (he was called Nino, a name he used all his life), Waterhouse lived in London from 1854. His mother died when he was eight, and his father married a woman with financial resources, so Waterhouse went to school in Leeds and the family moved to upscale Kensington. Waterhouse enjoyed an education steeped in the classics which remained a source of his beliefs about manly virtue and of his paintings' subjects. After training in his father's studio, he was admitted to the Academy, but as a sculpture student. His biographers do not agree on the length of his RA study and documentation is unclear.

Waterhouse entered the market in the 1870s, a time of competing styles (realism vs. medievalism) and post-industrial fascination with the past and with mythic idealism. His fascination with water as a symbol of fertility and femininity and his preoccupation with the female figure, often eroticized as oriental or classical, appear in his early work, as does his tendency to "poeticize" his subjects as idealized, beautiful, and symbolic figures. His early paintings are largely classical in subject (Roman music and dance, temple activities, languid figures doing nothing, the marketplace) at a time when Rome was the imperial model for the British empire. *The Remorse of Nero After the*